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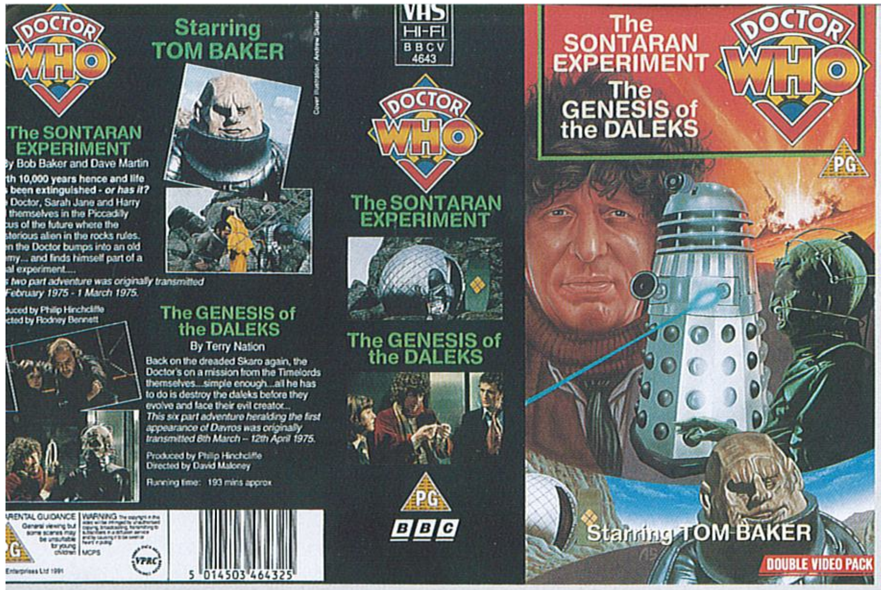
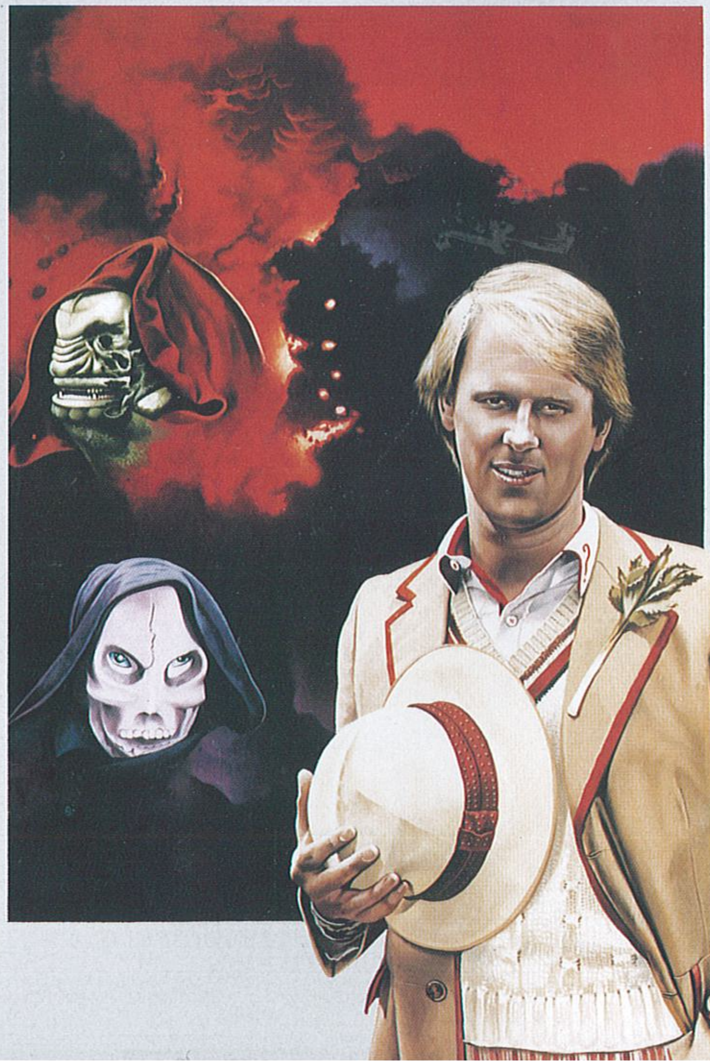
VOTED 'BEST FANZINE' BY THE READERS OF MARVEL'S 'DOCTOR WHO MAGAZINE'

THIS ISSUE





COVER, 14, 15: 'The Genesis of the Daleks' is arguably the most famous and controversial **Doctor Who** story ever, and next month sees its long-awaited home video release in a two-tape pack with **The Sontaran Experiment** - a welcome move by BBC Video. Appropriately we commissioned two opposing reviews.

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Editorial address:
P.O.Box 1015, Brighton BN2 2YU

HELLO and welcome aboard to any new readers who may have responded to our advert in DWM or picked up a copy at the M.O.M.I. shop. We're sure you'll enjoy your first taste of DWB, and if you can't wait three weeks until the next issue (see details on ordering below), then why not take advantage of our cut-price back issues offer on this page.

Last month in this column I ranted on a bit about apathy in fandom, and the feedback which resulted - including a doubling of the response to our series surveys overnight! - is proof that fans do generally care enough to get involved, even when they have to be reminded to do so every so often! A selection of your views on the subject appears in this month's letters column, together with my own summation on this controversial topic.

If you were not able to make it to the recent 'Doctor Who' auction at Bonhams, then the chances are that you do not have a copy of the official lavishly-produced 'Doctor Who' auction guide, packed with photos and all the details of the famous day. DWB has managed to secure the last 50 copies available at a price of £5.95 each (including postage and packing in a card envelope. This represents a saving of £2 off the original price).Orders will be despatched on a first-come, first-served basis, so don't delay!

Finally, a disturbing fact. Consider that 'Doctor Who' was never cancelled in 1985 and had continued being produced on an annual basis at 26 episodes per year. This would have resulted in, to date, a further 156 episodes to add to the series' grand tally. In reality, of course, since that cancellation there have only been 52 episodes produced - in real terms a loss of 104 episodes or, if you like, 26 four-parters! Sad, very sad,

Until next issue, GARY

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: Anglia Picture Publicity, Tom Baron, BBC Picture Publicity, BBC Video, Jeremy Bentham, Paula Bentham, Anthony Brown, Anthony Clark, Tony Clark, Peter Darvill-Evans & W.H.Allen, Paul Gadzikowski, Duncan Harvey, Paul Kirkley, Peter Linford, David Miller, Richard Molesworth, Tim Munro, Music Collector, Nick Pegg, Andrew Pixley, Ty Power, Nigel Robinson, Gary Russell, Ian Scoones, Michael Stevens, Keith Topping, Kathleen Toth, Alexandra Tynan, Deborah Watling, Paul Richardson.

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Together the above issues would normally cost almost £65 in total, but this special offer entitles you to purchase the entire set for £49 inclusive (please note that in the event of the Dalek Photonovel selling out, this price will remain).

Orders to: DWB Back issues, P.O.Box 1015,
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GRADE BREAKS HIS SILENCE... SIX YEARS TOO LATE!

THE LAST FEW WEEKS have seen a major resurgence in press interest for 'Doctor Who' and its uncertain future.

Broadcast, the television industry's trade paper, appears to have triggered the renewed speculation with a prominent item in its 26 July edition headed 'Who cares about who wins Who?', which itself was prompted by DWB writer Anthony Clark who contacted the paper in the hope that they might know something. Which of course they didn't, but they were keen to be filled in themselves, which Clark duly did, and in addition to this information Broadcast elicited the following quotes, firstly from the BBC who responded "speculative nonsense" to its suggestion that the return of **Doctor Who** was imminent, and secondly from Green Light on the perpetual delay of the **Doctor Who** movie: "We are glad we waited, as the script contains a universal concept that everyone can identify with. It allows the magic of the character of the Doctor to emerge. He's stronger, a bit more dark and mysterious, but retains his wit and quirkiness. It's not in the special effects/ science fiction **Star Wars** genre. We did not spend the amount of money we have over the years to let it become an American parody", which would indicate that their budget has been slashed dramatically!

RESPECTABLE FOLLOW-UPS

As the most respected and authoritative paper in the television trade, it is not surprising that Broadcast's piece provoked follow-up articles in several national newspapers, all, surprising, from the rather more "respectable" end.

Of these, by far the most enlightening was a mammoth half-page feature which appeared in the 29 July edition of The Daily Telegraph, headed 'Will **Doctor** Who ever rematerialise?" The extremely well-briefed Damian Thompson explained in concise detail the background to the cancellation, and went so far as to contact Channel 4 controller Michael Grade for his feelings on the subject, to which he replied: "All those low-budget television special effects made it look like something left over from the Seventies. It was as dull as ditchwater. I held it up for a year in the hope that it would put a bomb under the production team, but it didn't really work. With a lot more money spent on it and a firebrand young producer, the format may not be dead".

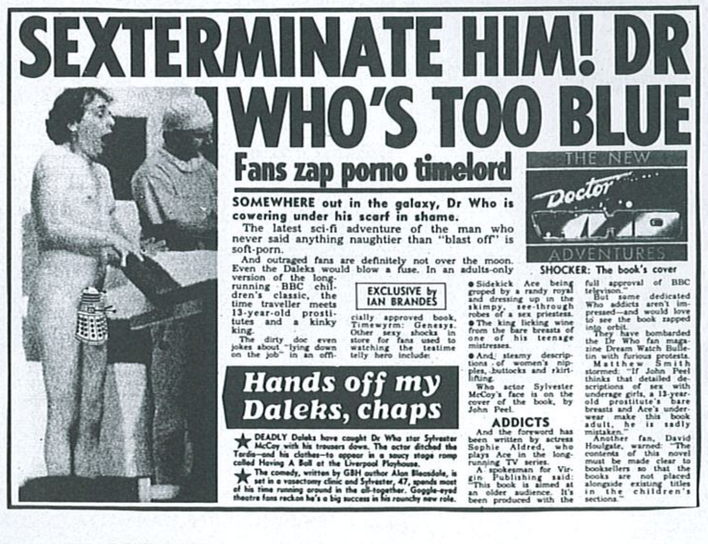
This would seem to confirm a growing opinion that Grade wasn't the villain we all painted him out to be in 1985. Indeed, had it been in his power then it seems that he would have replaced John Nathan-Turner and his (by implication) destructive policies and even gone so far as to increase the series' budget. But the job of hiring and firing lay with the Head of Series, Jonathan Powell. Perhaps we can even sympathise with Grade in that he had to take the only step available to him within his power, that of cancellation, in what can now be interpreted as a vain protest against Powell's own stubborness in refusing to improve **Doctor Who**'s profile... Time will tell whether **Doctor Who** figures high enough on Grade's list to be included in the season of vintage television programme's he is lining up for Channel 4 this autumn...

BAKER's RETURN THWARTED?

The Mail on Sunday carried a speculative little piece in its 4 August edition titled 'BBC thwarts the return of **Dr Who**'. It claimed that the BBC has turned down a £2.4 million plan to bring the series back as 12 half-hour episodes with Tom Baker reprising his rôle. Apparently an independent production company raised the finance required from American TV, and the episodes would have been recut to feature-film length for the US. The company in question is Naked Eye, who worked on **Chimera**, and the intended producer, Andrew Sewell, told the paper: "It is a great shame".

The Stage, on 8 August, under a piece headed 'Tired And Redundant Doctor Is Scrapped', quoted the BBC as saying that **Doctor Who** was "still an important programme for the BBC" and that its return would be "a strong and welcome addition to the schedule...", whereas a BBC spokesman told ITV's teletaxt service, Oracle on 18 July: "**Doctor Who** will be back but not in the near future. When it returns the programme will be vibrant, vital and improved - not a tired old Time Lord who comes back too soon".

From the evidence displayed over the past month, then, there is little doubt as to who's side the press is on. There is a universal call for the BBC to come clean and state their intentions clearly. While they continue to fob different people off with conflicting statements their own credibility will continue to wane to the point where we ask ourselves 'Do we seriously want our favourite series in the hands of such a dithering, indecisive, inept and deceitful television corporation?'...


THE NEW
Doctor
ADVENTURES

SEXTERMINATE HIM! DR WHO'S TOO BLUE

Fans zap porno timelord

SOMEWHERE out in the galaxy, Dr Who is cowering under his scarf in shame.

The latest sci-fi adventure of the man who never said anything naughtier than "blast off" is soft-porn.

And outraged fans are definitely not over the moon. Even the Daleks would blow a fuse. In an adults-only version of the long-running BBC children's classic, the time traveller meets 13-year-old prostitutes and a kinky king.

The dirty doc even jokes about "lying down on the job" in an officially approved book, Timewyrm: Genesys. Other sexy shocks in store for fans used to watching the teatime telly hero include:

EXCLUSIVE by IAN BRANDES

- Sidekick Ace being groped by a randy royal and dressing up in the skimpy, see-through robes of a sex priestess.
- The king licking wine from the bare breasts of one of his teenage mistresses.
- And steamy descriptions of women's nipples, buttocks and skirt-lifting.

Who actor Sylvester McCoy's face is on the cover of the book, by John Peel.

ADDICTS

And the foreword has been written by actress Sophie Aldred, who plays Ace in the long-running TV series.

A spokesman for Virgin Publishing said: "This book is aimed at an older audience. It's been produced with the full approval of BBC television."

But some dedicated Who addicts aren't impressed—and would love to see the book zapped into orbit.

They have bombarded the Dr Who fan magazine Dream Watch Bulletin with furious protests.

Matthew Smith stormed: "If John Peel thinks that detailed descriptions of sex with underage girls, a 13-year-old prostitute's bare breasts and Ace's underwear make this book adult, he is sadly mistaken."

Another fan, David Houlgate, warned: "The contents of this novel must be made clear to booksellers so that the books are not placed alongside existing titles in the children's sections."

SHOCKER: The book's cover

Hands off my Daleks, chaps

★ DEADLY Daleks have caught Dr Who star Sylvester McCoy with his trousers down. The actor ditched the Tardis—and his clothes—to appear in a saucy stage romp called Having A Ball at the Liverpool Playhouse.

★ The comedy, written by GBH author Alan Bleasdale, is set in a vasectomy clinic and Sylvester, 47, spends most of his time running around in the all-together. Goggle-eyed theatre fans reckon he's a big success in his raunchy new role.

BRIEFLY...

THIS sensational article appeared in the 11 August edition of the News of the World, but DWB wishes it known that it had no knowledge of the piece prior to publication. Obviously DWB is read in some high places, although no permission was obtained to lift our readers' views out of context in order to spice their story up.

MARY TAMM (right) is the subject of a new set of photographs from Mediaband to tie-in with her long overdue UK convention appearance at Nebula over the weekend of September 14-15th. (See DWB#89 for details...).

DUE to an unfortunate oversight, last issue we neglected to report on the deaths of three people who all contributed in various capacities to the 'Who mythos.

DON HOUGHTON, who scripted 'Inferno' and 'The Mind of Evil' died after a lengthy illness at his home in Florida, USA, aged 64.

RONALD ALLEN, the Crossroads star, who appeared in 'The Dominators' and 'The Ambassadors of Death', died on 18 June after a short battle with cancer.

Lastly, MILTON SUBOTSKY, the producer of the two '60s Amicus Dalek movies, died at the end of June aged 80. The only interview he ever gave in detail about the movies was conducted exclusively for DWB and appeared in DWB#81 exactly a year ago. The issue is still available, and the Amicus movies recently screened at the BFI were billed as a tribute to Milton. The Independent took the unprecedented step of printing two obituaries, after the first one by Andrew Beech drew some complaints over its partially erroneous content.

ALISTER PEARSON is poised to produce the covers for 'Robot' and 'The Caves of Androzani', pending final clearance being given for their release next February by BBC Video.

Among his reprint covers for Target next year are 'Earthshock', 'The Awakening', 'Planet of Fire', 'The Caves of Androzani', 'Arc of Infinity', 'Time-Flight' and 'Mawdryn Undead'.

FOLLOWING the attempts of Alan Dobbie and his MP, Sir Hugh Rossie to elicit a firm reply from the BBC over 'Doctor Who's' future, DWB reader Ian Wheeler had a go via his MP, David Maclean, who targetted BBC Director General Michael Checkland (see right). As Ian noted, "Checkland offered an almost identical response to that given by Marmaduke Hussey in response to Sir Hugh's letter. But to which of his colleagues is Mr Maclean referring? Could it be that John Major is one of us...?"

EVENTS

GALAXICON II
A Tribute to Douglas Camfield

IT IS A GREAT SHAME that the people at the Museum of the Moving Image decided to hold their opening event over the weekend of July 6-7th, as this undoubtedly over-shadowed the convention held in Glasgow at the same time.

Following on from last year's popular Galaxicon, this second attempt was billed as a tribute to possibly 'Doctor Who's' finest director, the sadly-missed Douglas Camfield, the man behind such classics as 'The Daleks' Master Plan', 'The Web of Fear', 'Inferno' and 'The Seeds of Doom'.

Yet again the organisation team, led by David Bickerstaff, assembled a very varied and interesting choice of guests, comprising Peter Bryant, Angus Lennie, John Woodnutt, Iain Fairbairnand, the hilariously funny Derek Newark (who had all the attendees in fits with his comical stories and expressions and verbal battering which he directed at David Bickerstaff - if there was ever a man suited to be a movie or stage Doctor, it is, in my opinion, Derek Newark!), plus special guest Shiela Dunn (Douglas' widow who appeared in 'Inferno'), and there were also two surprise and very welcome guests, the lovely Deborah Watling and, appearing with her for his first and perhaps only convention appearance, her father Jack - Professor Travers himself, who is currently celebrating a magnificent fifty years in the acting profession. For me personally the appearance of Jack and Debbie was the highlight of the entire weekend with their gentle sparring during the interview and, of course, Debbie demonstrating just why she became known as "leather-lungs"!

I honestly find it difficult to make any criticisms of this event. Each of the guests proved very interesting and entertaining. They all had fond memories of 'Doctor Who' and, of course, some lovely stories about "Dougie".

So, full marks once again to the team at Galaxicon. Another very enjoyable weekend which everyone seemed to enjoy. I certainly heard no complaints and again there was a very relaxed and friendly atmosphere where guests could actually be found - not hidden away in hospitality - but wandering around and chatting to fans either around the halls or watching videos in the well-stocked dealers room.

I must also make special mention of the committee, who were always on hand and ready to let you know what was going on. I actually felt involved at all times and came away feeling that I had certainly been given value for money.

JOHN HUGHES

G.B.H. EXTRA FILMING

EVEN THOSE who watch only a minimal amount of television cannot have failed to hear about G.B.H., Alan Bleasdale's massive seven-part series, that is one of the largest projects Channel 4 has yet attempted. Last autumn, however, G.B.H. was still in its filming stages, and I was lucky enough to have been involved, to a very small degree, in one day's filming for the serial.

A friend and fellow fan had heard that part of the action took place at a 'Doctor Who' convention, and invited me along. Not being one to turn down the opportunity of instant stardom, I took up the offer, and so found myself at the Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool, at 8am on the morning of September 28th, 1990.

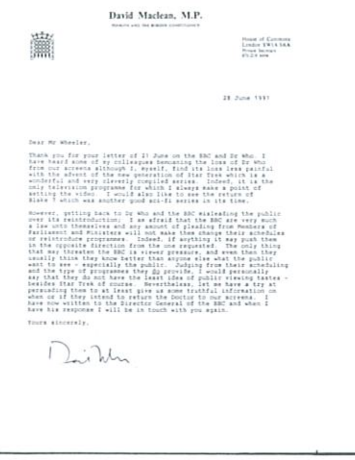
Much of the morning was spent getting into costume and being made-up. I eventually ended up wearing a copy of Nyssa's costume from 'Terminus'. (Why is it that people snicker nastily when I say that..?). The handful of about eight other fans with whom I had met up that morning boasted a variety of costumes - there was a mixed up batch of Doctors, a Cyberman, a Robot of Death. Most of the costumes had been brought along by fans, though an extra was hastily rustled up on the day out of plastic sheeting and green spray-paint. The costume budget for this scene had clearly already been spent on two lavish foam and rubber Daleks which were unveiled later in the day.

A lot of time was spent simply sitting around waiting to be called for filming. You chat to your friends, or get to know the other people who are there. Most of all, I found myself watching the proceedings - it was a chance to observe at first-hand the making of what I later found out was a major production. At first everything is a novel experience - the cameras, the lights, the make-up, watching an important scene being shot. Gradually you become more blasé about appearing in front of a camera, when earlier in the day you were desperately self-conscious. Most of all you become used to the rhythm of the work-pattern - quietening down as filming takes place in a nearby area, knowing when you can safely raise your voice again.

For those of you who didn't see this gem of a series, the finished scene is a delight to watch, and genuinely funny. The character Michael Murray (Robert Lindsay) has, by this fourth episode, degenerated from being a cocky, smooth-talking politician into a twitching, gabbling wreck. Staggering into the hotel foyer he comes face to face with the odd Cyberman, a Robot of Death, and a motley bunch of oddly-dressed people and monsters. Lindsay's look is priceless - one of paralysed disbelief and utter conviction that the last remnants of his sanity have gone with the wind. The sequence continues in a similar vein, becoming a theatre of the absurd, with Murray's personal collapse appearing pathetically funny in front of a manic, unreal background.

It was a long day in LIverpool, and by the end of it I was glad to get paid and head for home. Yet I enjoyed brushing with the world of tv filming. However unglamorous, noisy and tiring it is, it was still good fun and a fascinating, unusual experience. As for instant stardom, well, you only get to see the side of my face, very quickly, but with that costume I wasn't all that disappointed!

UNA McCORMACK



David Maclean, M.P.

House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

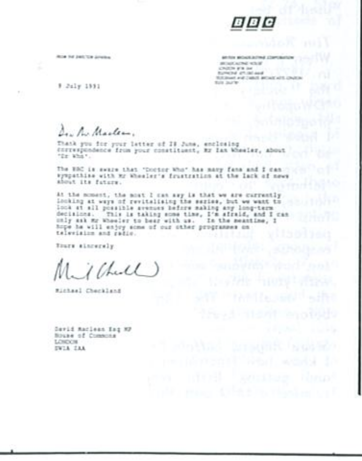
28 June 1991

Dear Mr Wheeler,

Thank you for your letter of 21 June on the BBC and Dr Who. I have heard some of my colleagues bemoaning the loss of Dr Who from our screens although I, myself, find its loss less painful with the advent of the new generation of Star Trek which is a wonderful and very cleverly compiled series. Indeed, it is the only television programme for which I always make a point of setting the video. I would also like to see the return of Blake 7 which was another good sci-fi series in its time.

However, getting back to Dr Who and the BBC misleading the public over its reintroduction; I am afraid that the BBC are very much a law unto themselves and any amount of pleading from Members of Parliament and Ministers will not make them change their schedules or reintroduce programmes. Indeed, if anything it may push them in the opposite direction from the one requested. The only thing that may threaten the BBC is viewer pressure, and even then they usually think they know better than anyone else what the public want to see - especially the public. Judging from their scheduling and the type of programmes they do provide, I would personally say that they do not have the least idea of public viewing tastes - besides Star Trek of course. Nevertheless, let me have a try at persuading them to at least give us some truthful information on when or if they intend to return the Doctor to our screens. I have now written to the Director General of the BBC and when I have his response I will be in touch with you again.

Yours sincerely,



BBC

FROM THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION
BROADCASTING HOUSE
LONDON W1A 1AA

9 July 1991

Dear Mr Maclean,

Thank you for your letter of 28 June, enclosing correspondence from your constituent, Mr Ian Wheeler, about "Dr Who".

The BBC is aware that 'Doctor Who' has many fans and I can sympathise with Mr Wheeler's frustration at the lack of news about its future.

At the moment, the most I can say is that we are currently looking at ways of revitalising the series, but we want to look at all possible avenues before making any long-term decisions. This is taking some time, I'm afraid, and I can only ask Mr Wheeler to bear with us. In the meantime, I hope he will enjoy some of our other programmes on television and radio.

Yours sincerely

Michael Checkland

David Maclean Esq MP
House of Commons
LONDON
SW1A 0AA

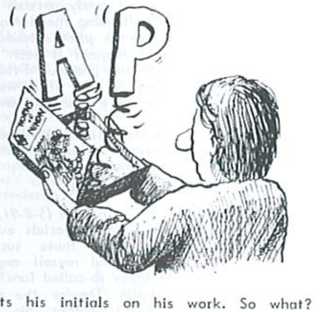
LAST MONTH'S EDITORIAL COLUMN LAMENTING THE APATHETIC STATE OF FANDOM HAS RESULTED IN THE LARGEST MONTHLY CORRESPONDENCE YET RECEIVED BY DWB. TO PRINT EVERY LETTER WE RECEIVED, AND IN FULL, WOULD HAVE TAKEN UP HALF OF THIS ISSUE ALONE, BUT WHAT FOLLOWS IS, HOPEFULLY, A FAIR REPRESENTATION OF THOSE RECEIVED...

"ALL YOU WANT TO DO IS CRITICISE"

DOCTOR WHO has been off the air for over 18 months and out of production for two years now, yet the so-called 'fans' of the show seem more concerned with slagging off almost every aspect of the show.

We all know that John Nathan-Turner was an awful producer and that he should have left at the same time as Peter Davison instead of teaming up with Colin Baker and later Bonnie Langford to debase and destroy a once quality show. Thankfully that era is long gone and the damage is done, but rehashing the JNT bashing will not bring the show back to our screens.

Then there are the new original novels which were slagged off before they were even published; at least Virgin Books have enough faith in Doctor Who to produce new stories because the 'fans' obviously don't. Who honestly gives a damn who the cover artist is as long as they are good? I only dislike a cover when it's bad, like **Attack of the Cybermen**, yet the 'fans' get in a tizzy because Alister Pearson puts his initials on his work. So what? good luck to him.



Next up is **Doctor Who** Magazine which, for the last decade or so, has been for many the only source of information on the production of the show. As for its alleged bias, the magazine is published under license and in its own interests needs to keep a good relationship with the powers that be. Anyway, why should it be over-critical of the show when fandom covers that field so well? DWM caters not just for the hardcore fan but also for the casual reader who probably doesn't know or care who the past producers are. What other British tv show has a regular magazine devoted to it, even when it's out of production? What would the 'fans' rather have? No magazine at all?

The videos don't escape either; whatever BBC Video does is never right. Who the hell cares if a bit of music and the closing credits of **The Web Planet** have been changed. As long as 99% of it's intact, so what? Perhaps the 'fans' don't want them relased at all?

The fans seem so concerned with criticising the show and everything related to it that they forget the one vital thing that matters above all - that it is no longer being made and seems unlikely to be for the forseeable future. Perhaps these 'fans' could direct their bile to getting the show back in some organised fashion, rather than acting as a bunch of vultures picking over the show's remains.

By the way, DWB is a fine publication, keep it going. Its loss would be another nail in Doctor Who's coffin.

NOTHING LASTS FOREVER

Gareth Lonnen, Dorset (23-7-91)

In DWB#92 you attack the supposedly apathetic readership for, a) lack of response to the DWB poll and, b) lack of response to campaigns to return **Doctor Who** to our screens. I have not written to DWB before because, by and large, I have wholeheartedly agreed with the general opinion (i.e. justified bias against JNT) that it has continually put forward. There would be very little interest for other readers if I were to write every month to say that I agreed with the opinions presented and that I was also pleased with the quality of the magazine. Such bland and facile letters are the province of the Marvel magazine. The very fact that every month this reader puts his money where his mouth is should save him from editorial attack.

The reason that I have not voted so far in the poll is because there have only been four stories since the last one! I just don't see how a 1991 poll could differ substantially from that of 1989, the latter of which I consider as the definitive statement on **Doctor Who** as a whole. Only after another ten years of stories/video releases would there be any point in doing another.

Finally, I did not become involved in any campaign to return **Doctor Who** to tv because I believe its life is over. It is obvious the BBC do too, else the hopeful would not **still** be waiting. Quite simply, **Doctor Who** does not deserve to return. After the sad departure of Davison, I gave up hoping that each season would be better than the one before, or at least partly enjoyable. The number of post-**Androzani** stories that deserved to go out under the **Doctor Who** banner could be counted upon the fingers of one (Sontaran's) hand! **Doctor Who** has gone so far off the rails under a certain Nathan-Turner that a general tv audience would have to be **brisked** to watch it again. Of course there have been low points in the series' past (i.e. seasons 6 and 15), but none of these have lasted **six years**! I have been appalled at the contempt for both general audience and committed fan that **Doctor Who** has embodied since 1985: the laughable ineptitude of Messrs Baker and McCoy, the amateurish 'standards' of production and scripting too numerous to list, and the atrocities perpetuated against its artistic and moral ethos. I cannot see that an independent company would improve matters in any way: it would either fall into the hands of 'fannish' producers who would merely imitate the part, or the exploitative and unimaginative craftsmen who dominate all tv channels in this country now. Nothing lasts forever, and I think it's about time fandom started accepting the fact.

Alan Barnes, Herts (25-7-91)

Have you considered the possibility that your readers simply aren't interested in another bloody series survey? My response is enclosed with this letter. It's very honest, but, quite frankly, I very much doubt that many others are. Too many of your readers seem dogmatically pro- or anti- in their attitudes to actually make for an interesting final tally. The problem lies with the word 'favourite'. It's waffly, opinionated, imprecise and quite frankly it renders the entire survey vastly inconclusive, becoming a chart of trends rather than a definitive catalogue which, seeing as all three series are dead or, ahem, 'resting' at the moment, would make a far more valuable document. Sure, there'll be interesting little differences between this and the last one. Graham Williams' stories will be remembered rather more fondly, I'm sure, and I'd like to see if **City of Death** has fared better or worse since video release, and how high **Fenric** is placed (odds on top five). But that's as far as my interest extends, I'm afraid. This may come as a shock to you, Gary, but I just don't care. I don't give a damn who the least favorite **Blake's 7** guest star is amongst your readership. I couldn't give a toss what the 'best' **Star Trek** episode title was. In your heart of hearts, Gary, could you honestly tell me that you give a flying one either? Does it really matter? That's why, until now, I hadn't replied to the survey, and I'm sure many of your other readers felt the same about the whole pointless and time-consuming exercise. This really isn't what I want out of DWB. So what do I want?

The Good Things: Trivia, like the Troughton telesnaps; Alexandra Tynan's costume designs; rare photos; finding Grim's Dyke; interviewing Ian Stuart Black, Lalla Ward, Michael Elwyn, the girl who played Venus Smith; classy writing, like Paul Cornell's **Spiders** review; and even Darvill-Evans' fabulous rebuke to Anthony Clark. Quality reviews, shouting at the right people... These are the things you and your contributors do well, Gary. What I don't like is the nit-picking, the back-stabbing and most of all, the untempered and sometimes wildly out-of-proportion opinion. For example, in recent months you've run a strip called 'DWAQ 91', comparing a very badly organised, inadequate and failing fan organisation to Saddam Hussein's autocracy. Get real, Gary. The DWAS is crap, yes, but there are far better ways of arguing that than in this sick little cartoon. You're the editor, so edit! An editor is more than accountable to his customers, he's responsible to them. I take great offence at some of the remarks in DWB#92's lettercol; comparing JNT's continuing supervision of

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video selection to "putting Myra Hindley in charge of a children's home", for God's sake! Cutting an extranvagance like that won't dilute the writer's opinions. That's not censorship, that's accountability. Michael Healy writes to say how much he disliked the version of the theme on the era tapes, so fine. He does so perfectly well, so why does he feel the need to tell us he was "aurally raped"? That isn't witty, nor is it amusing, nor does it add one iota to my comprehension of his feelings. What it is is sick, totally out of order. So why didn't you cut it?

So, there you go. Round about 800 words off my Amstrad. Is that "involved" enough? Is that enough of an "active rôle" for me to take? Happy now?

Edwin Taylor, Manchester (31-7-91)
David Gibbs' footnote to the **Silver Nemesis** article in DWB#92 was amusing. I had never realised that DWB had an ethos. Perhaps, like wine, it has a bouquet also? An interesting piece of pretention.

Then there was the editorial. Dear oh dear, Gary, not another pathetic blackmail attempt. Surveys are petty, pointless and boring - however much you stamp your feet you cannot make me or anybody else do yet another. Your threats are really rather pathetic. There are plenty of magazines to fill any gap left by DWB ceasing publication if you ever intend to, so go ahead, Gary, call our bluff...

Stephen Bell, West Yorkshire (24-7-91)
Good grief! If the series surveys are so important to you that not having them means the end of DWB, then all right, here you are. Not that it means a lot; by the time you receive this I'll probably have changed my mind about a lot of the answers. I'm afraid that these surveys and their results don't interest me in the slightest; they are an absolute bore and a waste of valuable space in your publication. I reject any accusation of apathy, for I continue to find DWB to be the most interesting read of the month.

Stephen Anderson, Berkshire (25-7-91)
How dare you insult the fans of **Doctor Who** (and **Star Trek** etc.) who read your magazine! You called them - **me!** - lazy! What do you mean by directing such comments against your readers? Surely it is up to us if we reply to your survey or write letters to you. We **pay** for your fanzine 'mate', and frankly do not **have** to do **anything** you say. I was even considering doing your survey when I saw it first in DWB#90, until I read it that is. With your system I would only be able to vote for sixth and seventh Doctor stories (I am 15) when there are much better Peter Davison stories (he's my favourite Doctor) and other Doctors' stories I have seen on video. And the rest of the survey sheet is useless to me as I am not a fan of either **Blake's 7** or **Star Trek**.

Criag Gray, Glasgow (26-7-91)
As a reader of your excellent DWB for almost the last two years, I was amazed at your outburst in the editorial of issue 92. While I can appreciate your anger at the lack of response to the series surveys, I feel that threatening to end at DWB#100 is nothing short of cheap blackmail. Surely this is not the way to encourage reader participation?

As for the survey itself, I feel it has a few flaws and have been beginning to question the validity of such polls. I have been a regular viewer of **Doctor Who** all my life, but under the given voting system I am only allowed to vote on the Davison era onwards. This system ignores the fact that I (and I would imagine many others) have 'disocvered' favourites amongst the growing video range, such as **The Talons of Weng-Chiang** which would certainly be in my top fifteen. Also, not having all of the stories on tape to recall at my leisure, I have to rely on memory to decide what to vote for. As we all know the memory **does** cheat; I fondly remembered **The City of Death** from its original broadcast, but was disappointed when I bought the video earlier this year, and a Peter Davison story I felt was good when I was 11 or 12 may not look so good now. These problems also plague **Blake's 7**, which I am only now re-discovering via the video releases. **Star Trek** is probably the best section of the survey as the complete series is available on video to be judged.

Surely articles such as 'Horns of a Dilemma' and 'Memory Cheats' and the letters page are more interesting ways to air fans' likes and dislikes, together with their reasons, as opposed to just a sterile list?

Paul Raven, Essex (30-7-91)
I read your whinging editorial in DWB#92 and had a jolly good laugh. Who are you kidding? Wrap up DWB? Whatever next? I'm not falling for such a cheap ploy, but I've filled in my survey form like a good boy so you did prickle my conscience ever so slightly.

David Rasmussen, Oxford (1-8-91)
I would like to point out that the **only** reason I have responded to the series survey is to stop you from wasting a page every issue by printing the bloody thing! *(ED: Precisely the motive behind repeating it in the first place!).* You'd probably have got a better response if you hadn't set such stupid restrictions on which stories we could vote for in the **Doctor Who** section. I may have only watched the programme regularly since the start of Season 23, but I do have around half of all stories on video so am quite capable of voting for stories from all eras.

ED: The point David and Paul raise about the survey appears to be an area where many have failed to grasp the reasoning for such a restriction, yet it is the fairest method of proportioning the results of all seven Doctors over the twenty-six years of the programme's run as a whole, as proven by the results of our previous poll in DWB#69.

David Houlgate, North Yorkshire (29-7-91)
As a subscriber I haven't shelled out nearly £30 so you can continue to print your DWB Telefantasy Series Survey every month (four times to date), even if it's only taking the place of an advert or painting. 'Space filler' springs to mind.

Moving on, but slightly related, I take exception to your remarks concerning the lack of response to the Day of Action last November. Do you have any idea how much it would cost me to phone the BBC in London from Harrogate, twenty times as suggested? I phoned once. For the price of that one call I could have sent at least six letters, something I have been doing now for 18 months. The idea was ill-conceived from the start. What we need is a co-ordinated letter-writing campaign so that there is an influx of letters to the BBC at approximately the same time. Instead of the BBC receiving a steady stream of letters we should be **flooding** them! May I suggest a week before the pilot episode is shown at the end of August? If each fan sends five letters on the previous Friday, it would only cost £1.10. This would disrupt the BBC far more than any phone campaign.

PS: Thank goodness **The Highlanders** Photonovel has finished. Overkill I think with the Photonovels this year.

APATHETIC OGRE

Stephen Carlin, Northern Ireland (5-8-91)
Having read Gary Leigh's editorials every month asking where all those survey returns are, I finally find myself angry. Where the hell are these so-called fans?

The answer is simple: They're the type of person who won't bother his ass (definitely **his** - they're usually male) when the programme he watches quietly fades away. The sheer effort of lifting a pen and using it to write a letter to the BBC appears to be beyond their mental capacities. They want, want, want, but won't really bother too much to find what they want. As long as it's served to them, great.

Goodbye DWB, it was nice knowing you, but I have to admit that I'm tired and weary of trying to fight this apathetic ogre.

Mark Saunders, Isle of Wight (29-7-91)
I hope your threat to end DWB at issue 100 was just that: a threat. If it was intended to give a proverbial kick up the pants to those apathetic readers and fandom in general then I approve.

Without trying to sound corny, DWB is an important part of my month, nay my life. Having sampled and abandoned the likes of Starburst, Starlog, TV Zone etc., my sole fantasy reading each month is DWB. I can't get on with DWM for the simple reason that it falls over itself to be uncontroversial and seems to make no effort to herald the Doctor's return in any sense, happily ticking along aimed at all the 13-year-olds. I can't get on with The Frame, In-Vision etc. because, though nicely presented, they represent little value for money, and fanzines generally waste good trees. Except DWB of course, which has teeth, is unafraid to bite, and rarely bites hatefully. If you read something in DWB it is more likely to be truthful or at least sincere in its viewpoint.

I would really miss it...

It's my view that many fans, including DWB readers, have passed the point of no return (or nearly) regarding **Doctor Who.** Perhaps they (we?) have come to the logical conclusion that, in reality, **Doctor Who** is dead (after, arguably, a long illness called "the 1980s") and that the BBC have no serious plans to bring it back at all. That they learned their lesson from 1985 and decided on a more subtle approach to cancellation the second time around. Therefore what is the point of a letter writing/phone campaign and why bother with a series survey? What would it achieve? Why try to resurrect the dead?

I sometimes wonder whether it will be necessary for **Doctor Who** to end and be reborn later, as **Star Trek** did, on a wave of renewed interest. At least it might actually give JNT time to find a new job well out of the way before the series started up again.

R.Collins, East Sussex (20-7-91)
Your editorial had me reeling. Only 200 poll forms returned! I can understand your views about not continuing past DWB#100, but let's not be too hasty. DWB was the first fanzine that I ever bought back at issue 50 and I can't wait for it to hit the shelf of Brighton's Forbideen Planet each month. I enclose my poll form, as I hope many others now have. DWB wasn't voted "Best Fanzine" by the readers of DWM for nothing, so obviously a lot of people read and enjoy your publication, so don't end it now.

John Hopper, Kent (24-7-91)
Please find enclosed my response to the biennial DWB survey and a word of appreciation for your titanic task of editing DWB. I rarely agree with your editorial stance, but that needn't and doesn't stop me appreciating your dedication to your task.

Richard Develyn, East Sussex (2-8-91)
It would be a shame if you stopped producing DWB, especially for the reasons you gave. Apathy in others is a fact of life we all learn sooner or later, and I don't think this school-masterly attitude of yours is any help. We are constantly bombarded with pleas for greater involvement and support by human rights campaigners, religious zealots, political activists, anti-vivisectionists, and the list goes on. Issues more important than the survival of **Doctor Who** and yet, to the astonishment of convention organisers and the like, participation is always disappointing. I'm afraid I fall into the category of the apathetic non-participant - there are many causes I feel strongly about which I do not support as much as I could and I have to say I am not too uncomfortable about my feelings either. The only explanation I can offer for this paradoxical behaviour is I'm rather a busy man.

John Russell, Motherwell (4-8-91)
I am enclosing my series survey results with great reluctance. In fact the only reason I am returning them is because of your threat to stop producing what is, in my opinion, the most informative and entertaining magazine, of any kind, that I have ever seen. The reason I did not fill in the form was most definitely not because of apathy but was, in fact, a genuine mistrust of my own memory. If you had asked what were the 'Best' and 'Worst' out of all the stories we have seen then you might have got a better response.

David A. Thomas, Mid Glamorgan (1-8-91)
Frankly I'm shocked - give up? How could you even contemplate such a move after all these years? If you do what you suggest in your editorial, then not only will you be doing what everybody else is doing (i.e. giving up) but you will also be letting down those of us who do care about the future of **Doctor Who** and all the other programmes covered in DWB.

If your intention was to jolt people into realising that they have to participate in order to enjoy the whole experience of science fiction, then good luck to you - I often tell myself that I'm being apathetic and should do more to 'further the cause', and the threat of no more DWB on top of the programme's still uncertain future has made me want to stand up and be counted. Chalk one convert up on your score card at least!

John Hudson, Tyne and Wear (3-8-91)
I enjoyed DWB#92, particularly the Tom Baker feature and the controversy over DWM. This is what fanzines are for - not to "toe the official line" all the time. I would certainly miss the magazine if you didn't carry on - there would be nothing to remind me of how good **Doctor Who** used to be!

Tim Robinson, Merseyside (28-7-91)
When I was a member of the DWAS back in 1977/78, the complaint of the day in the society publication was that of "DWapathy". After a long break from the programme, and from fandom in particular, I have been back in the fold for a year or so now but little has changed. The tendency to expect others to get involved (I prefer 'lethargy' to 'apathy') is a fact of human nature, and certainly not confined to **Who** fans. Your editorial in DWB#92 was perfectly justified, given the poor survey response, and nicely timed - it is hard to see how anyone won't be stung into action with your threat ringing in their ears, and the excellent **The Highlanders** Photonovel before their eyes!

Steve Rogers, Suffolk (3-8-91)
I know how frustrating trying to run a poll and getting little response is. I tried running a **UFO** poll through Fanderson and got less than 25 returns. I personally only think it's fair to either write the odd letter or respond to surveys as a kind of "thank you" for producing the magazine in the first place. It would be a great shame to lose DWB - it frightens me to think of the lack of news we would have got over the years without DWB there to report it. Maybe it would be a poke in the eye to the apathetic reader that if DWB#100 is last then it should only go to those who have played an active part in the past. Whatever happens nobody will ever be able to deny you DWB's phenomenal success. I hope, regardless of extra returns or not, that you will publish the poll results - I will certainly find them interesting.

C.Nicol, Dundee (8-8-91)
The inside of DWB#92 was once again its usual high standard - where else would you see two pages of photos from the M.O.M.I. exhibition or up to the minute news so quickly? The only thing wrong with the issue was the cover. The logo was almost non-existent and the colours were depressing, but considering the situration on fan apathy I'm not surprised. Are these people who can't be bothered to vote in the survey connected with the team making the **Doctor Who** movie? Yes, they have done virtually nothing as well. What will they do when they see the results? Probably start disagreeing with them. These are the sort of people who would walk by if you had an accident in the street.

Glenn Tatton, London SE6 (30-7-91)
The reason I didn't complete your poll was the difficulty in putting things in order. Why not ask for our ten favourite stories, but don't look for first, second, etc. The collation of readers' favourite tens (or fifteens) would be just as interesting. Please don't be disillusioned. Your fine magazine's circulation is the true indicator of the level of interest, and of the worth of your own efforts.

DWB is the only fanzine I buy regularly. I've bought every issue since #53 and wish I'd started sooner. In some ways I mourn the loss of the old-style exclusive **Who** coverage, but would concede that the magazine is now more interesting and informative. My only complaint is that the **STTNG** plot synopses are now too long - those for season two were far better and took up less pages, and could your video reviews stop assuming the reader knows the story and its history and be a little less closed?

Roslyn Robertson, Edinburgh (25-7-91)
I am, admittedly, one of the "silent" fans to whom you were referring. I prefer to let others mouth-off back and forth every month in your columns, because I was of the opinion that 'if you've nothing worth saying, don't bother in the first place'. But, of course, you are correct. The same loyal fans who write in or whatever at least show some enthusiasm (even though their irate rantings grate increasingly on my nerves), and so to do my bit I have finally made the effort to return my form and got off my big, useless backside. Not, you understand, completely due to the possibility of losing DWB, but because your persistence made me realise how much you care about the magazine and how much we should too.

Now that I **have** written, may I say how thrilled I've been with the series of **Blake's 7** interviews you've been running (now there's a programme I **do** care for!), and should DWB live and thrive in the future then any chance of following these up with interviews with Steven Pacey and Michael Keating?

Simon Luckin, London SW2 (29-7-91)
Even though I've been a **Doctor Who** fan since its conception in 1963, I have just recently discovered your magazine and am dismayed to read you are considering folding. Please don't let this happen. Apart from being one of the most interesting and informative mags around, you have totally surpassed yourselves with the Photonovels. I firmly believe that all the 'lost' Hartnell and Troughton episodes/stories exist somewhere, but until that glorious day when, hopefully, they turn up, your Photobovels give us - the true die-hard fans - the chance to recapture those glorious early days, so **please** can we have some more?

Simon Biggam, Glasgow (10-8-91)
Ending DWB would leave a huge gap in the world of telefantasy. Your magazine is without doubt the best source of information of **Doctor Who, Star Trek, STTNG, Blake's 7** and many others, and it would be a shame to see it come to an end because of the apathy of your readers.

I look forward immensely to DWB arriving at my local Forbidden Planet each month. TV Zone has nice photographs now and again but on the whole is shallow, obviously aimed at a mass market. It was DWB that started to have regular features on **STTNG** before it was shown in this country; it is DWB that constantly presents rare photographs from **Doctor Who**; and you were also the first magazine to review the **Blake's 7** Technical Manual...

John Papadatos, Melbourne 3032 (7-8-91)
Fan apathy, in all its guises, has always existed. I must say that I'm not the most 'get up and go' fan about. I don't produce a fanzine, nor do I contribute articles or reviews. But I do, however, take time out to write letters to various fanzines and to the BBC and I always vote in surveys, mainly because I enjoy reading the results. It's the minimum any fan can do. If DWB does not continue after issue 100, then that would leave a tremendous gap in the news I (and presumably thousands of others) receive. DWB also contains the liveliest letters page in any fanzine or professional publication around and thus becomes an important entity in itself. Add the success of the trio of Photonovels you have published and DWB can be seen as a major force in fandom and would undoubtedly be sorely missed. And as a critic of the Doctor once said, "A cosmos without DWB scarcely bears thinking about".

As for #92 itself, the M.O.M.I. photographs were interesting, especially the 'dummy' fan (is this some sort of a comment on us all?) with his zombie stare watching a BBC video. The final episode of **The Highlanders** was enjoyable and the cover was tremendous. You should release it as next year's subscription poster (am I being too optimistic?).

ED: Glad that someone liked the cover, even though our printers managed to do the logo in the wrong colour (it should have been white!).

That's it on the subject of fan apathy for the time being. Nice to see that most letters received on the subject were largely sympathetic, though I concede that perhaps I was too vehement in my comments. It is a subject I feel strongly about, but as has been pointed out it is a sad fact of human nature and something we all have to live with. It certainly isn't reason enough to shut up shop, so hopefully DWB - in whatever form - will continue going strong for some time yet...

MORE TIMEWYRM VIEWS

Paul Lang, Glasgow (1-8-91)
Unlike Matthew Smith in DWB#92 I certainly don't consider **Timewyrm: Genesys** to be particularly "masturbatory". I thought the passages concerned with sex and prostitution were intended to be an accurate representation of the lifestyle of that period culture, and that it was very accurately portrayed. Such things were part-and-parcel of the legend on which the story was based and people did conduct their lives in a manner accurately reflected by the characters in the book. To suggest that the book is only suitable to adolescent fans who want a bit of "bum and tit" (to quote your review) is a gross underestimation of these fans, and also a great personal insult to those involved with the novel. I've also read and enjoyed **Exodus,** which will probably shock Mr.Smith as it only contains fleeting sexual comments, and apparently it is all I - the 'average' 16 year old - am after.

Tim Munro, West Yorkshire (10-7-91)
Well, I don't know how Peter Darvill-Evans had the cheek to be so arrogant and pompous in DWB#89. Every word of Anthony Clark's **Genesys** review has turned out ot be accurate. That book has got to be the most offensive, contrived, juvenile, badly-written, amateurish, pretentious waste of trees I've ever read in my life. It is unreadable. Even the proof-reading stinks. Any editor who could put such drivel in print has no right whatsoever to accuse DWB of unprofessionalism!

Matthew Smith, East Sussex (13-8-91)
I was more than a little taken aback to find my name and part of my letter in DWB#92 included in an article on **Genesys** in The News of the World on August 11th. Quite apart from the shock of it all, I object to being mis-represented as an "outraged fan". Readers of my original letter will hopefully realise that I wasn't "storming" about the sexual content of the book (how anyone can get upset about sex if beyond me), rather I was expressing an opinion that the use of sex in **Genesys** borders on overkill and in no way helps make the book 'adult'. Personally I found it to be adolescent drivel, but that's just my opinion.

David Fox, Sheffield (1-8-91)
After reading (and reviewing) Peel's superb and entertaining novel I would like to ask Matthew exactly where are these "detailed descriptions" of sex? The answer is they are simply non-existent. Sex is only hinted at in the book; it goes nowhere near to what Smith calls "masturbatory material": a frenzy of condemnation. Consider **Red Dwarf: Better Than Life.** This contains numerous references to prostitution, genetalia and bedroom antics, as well as displaying Rimmer's blatant sexist disregard for women. Hardly anyone criticised this, so why pour scorn on **Genesys?** I can see little that would offend potential readers of the novel, the only character that is actually sexist being Gilgamesh, who is rightly put in his place for most of the novel.

The same cannot be said for **Exodus,** where Terrance Dicks gives us his stereotyped view of women, Ace being given the worst treatment possible. Whereas in **Genesys** her characterisation is spot on, in **Exodus** she is dragged down to the level of a screamer. Dicks has her run off, get caught, scream and faint - exactly the things her character would not do. But of course Matthew Smith and David Gibbs will probably enjoy this, having women "put in their place" under the sexist stereotype of being helpless and defenceless and dependent on men throughout the book.

I admit that the plot of **Genesys** is unoriginal, but to me the novel represents classic **Who** at its best, being gripping, entertaining and in some places hilariously funny.

Robert Carter, Glasgow (28-7-91)
My heart actually faltered when I heard that Terrance Dicks had been assigned one of the **Timewyrm** stories, but having finished **Exodus** I'm astounded - a **Doctor Who** story we haven't experienced in a long time. I couldn't put the book down once started and concluded that this was truly adult in the way that I suspect Virgin wanted. Violence, but in context and not gratuitous; referring to what consenting adults might or might not do. The horrors of a Nazi world that might have been and, shock, horror, someone actually mentioned homosexuality in a **Doctor Who** novel! Perhaps someone could tell W.H.Smiths in Glasgow what they're actually stocking next to the Nancy Drew Mysteries. I can't add anything except keep them coming, I'm enjoying them if nobody else is!

CONGRATULATIONS!

Paul Dumont, Hampshire (16-7-91)
Congratulations on winning DWM's fanzine poll. It's a shame DWM couldn't bring itself to congratulate you. So DWB has now registered for VAT - so what? Did any of the 30% add to their votes the message: "of course this can't be a fanzine"? And what of all those issues of DWB produced before VAT registration - suddenly they don't count?

I found this VAT criteria nit-picking, to say the least: what was worse still was the subsequent quote from David Howe and direct plug for The Frame. The least DWM could have done was to have said "Readers can judge for themselves whether DWB is a fanzine or not" and printed your address. It's ironic, because DWM has adopted many of DWB's features - photos of artists with their book/video covers, illustrations by Rob Ashby and Paul Vyse, etc.

ED: And you don't have to be profit-making to be VAT registered, which DWAS have been for some years now. On the subject of DWM, we received many comments following last issue's "JNT's Mouthpiece" article which will appear next issue...

Craig Hinton, Coventry (17-7-91)
Due to both extreme pressure of work and illness in the family, I am unable to complete my account of my tenure as DWAS co-ordinator before September.

GENERAL VIEWS

Duncan Steele, Fife (10-8-91)
Richard Fitzgerald's opinions on that much maligned series **Star Cops** (ref:DWB#92) were way, way out of line. All nine episodes were timeless classics. Yes, classic examples of how bad television can get when it really tries. **Star Cops** was right up there with other great turkeys of all time: **Doctor Who** seasons 22-26, **Star Trek** season 3 and every single episode of **STTNG.**

Fliss Davies, Horizon Fan Club (4-8-91)
As a keen fan of **Blake's 7,** I find it hard to believe that Julian Knott has been watching the same series as I have. His review, in DWB#91, of the BBC release of **Horizon/Pressure Point** suggests that these two episodes "sorely try the dedication of fan and casual viewer alike". In fact these are two superb episodes, among the favourites of **Blake's 7** fans, representing the series at its finest.

Horizon, for example, contains many of the elements that make **Blake's 7** so enjoyable; the fight against the Federation, the interplay between characters, and the unexpected twists in the storyline. Who cares if the characters are not ideal rôle models? It is their very human failings that make them so believable, and so entertaining to watch. And **Pressure Point** is one of the most popular of all **Blake's 7** episodes, extremely dramatic and moving. A high proportion of members of Horizon, the **Blake's 7** Appreciation Society would include **Pressure Point** in their list of top ten favourite episodes, and the club's 'Supreme Commander' (club co-ordinator) admitted to having cried when Gan died.

"A couple of fairly poor episodes" Mr.Knott? I think you will find that the majority of **Blake's 7** fans, and probably casual viewers too, will not be of the same opinion.

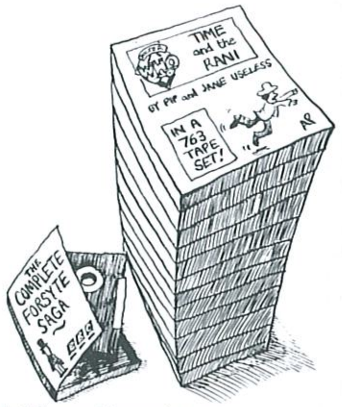
Iain Short, Cleveland (6-8-91)
I have followed the reviews of the **Blake's 7** videos with interest, but on the whole have found them too brief and dismissive to this fine series. **Blake's 7** was not a show ot great special effects or realistic spaceship designs. Instead it relied upon the issues that the scripts tackled and good performances from the regular cast and, for the most part, the guest cast.

Bryan Jenner, Calgary, Canada (25-6-91)
In past issues of DWB many have argued that the reason behind **Doctor Who's** fall from grace during the 1980s was due to its reliance on continuity and fan patronage. It was claimed that writing stories with obscure references and continuity links, while pleasing the fans, alienated the general public. However, the past season of **STTNG** has done exactly the same thing, and has drawn an increasingly larger audience than ever before! Could it be then that **Doctor Who** fell from grace for reasons other than narcissism?

Mark Wright, West Yorkshire (31-7-91)
I'm quite intrigued by the idea of 'Schlock-watch' (ref:DWB#92). Rather than keeping this restricted to **Doctor Who,** why not open it to telefantasy in general, because there has been some abysmal stuff which is just good fun to watch. I'd particularly like to do something on **Into the Labyrinth.**

ED: Great idea, Mark. Any other takers?

Michael Seely, Norfolk (24-7-91)
Thankyou very much for DWB#92 with my article unedited, and thanks to John Freeman for answering my complaints honestly. It was the sort of response I was hoping for. Rather than it being a waste of space for DWB to print examinations of DWM, I think it is justified to gain a response. Had I written in to DWM would my complaints have been answered I wonder?



Neil Hunter, Chester (10-7-91)
I was very surprised to see **Attack of the Cybermen** scheduled for next year on BBC Video. Whilst they're about it, perhaps they could unearth such gems as **Timelash, Terror of the Vervoids, Horns of Nimon** and so forth as shining examples of a BBC videogram, and perhaps they could put each episode on an individual tape and bring the price up to around £50, just in case we weren't paying enough already...

GAYS ABANDONED

Kim Farey, Essex (15-7-91)
I've been reading DWB for quite a few months now, mainly for the **Star Trek** information. It's quite weird how a mainly **Doctor Who** publication has the best and latest **Trek** stuff!

Incidentally, the April **Trek** update mentioned the Sun story that David Gerrold quit the series after his 'gay' episode was rejected. You won't be surprised to know, given The Sun's history, that that isn't what happened. It's no secret that both David and D.C.Fontana ended up suing Paramount. Unfortunately David isn't allowed to talk about why, he left as part of the settlement that was reached. I do however have a copy of the 'Blood and Fire' script and it's about two crewmen who care deeply about each other who both happen to be men. There are no sex scenes. Tragically, it would have made the best first season episode if it had been made.

IN THE LAND OF MAKE-BELIEVE

PAUL KIRKLEY'S article 'Coming Back in Style' in the last DWB special made some very valid points about directorial style in the context of using visual and acting techniques to create what can be blanket-labelled as 'mood'. The article rounded off, however, with an expressed wish for Doctor Who to move away from the "theatrical approach" and for it to become less "stage-like".

I would like to question this by offering the opinion that in many ways Doctor Who, and more importantly its audience, could benefit from "the theatrical approach". In the past few years one of the programme's downfalls may have been that it has tried to be less like entertainment and a vehicle for the imagination than it should.

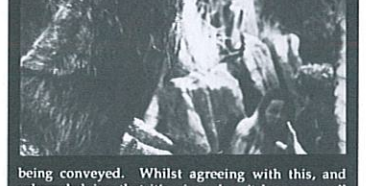
The whole business of live theatre, for the audience, is suspension of disbelief. A play is performed (with the exception of those by such alienating playwrights as Brecht) with the intention of capturing the imagination. It purports to be a slice of real life.

In television we are (often) afforded the luxury of expansive, intricate sets or even real locations. Therefore in many ways the audience's job of believing is made easier. But has this made many people gluttons for perfect set design? Are television audiences now less willing to use their imagination when faced with "shoddy" studio scenery, costumes or special effects.

Personally I find it little bother, whilst telling myself that any of seven well-known actors is actually a traveller in Time and Space, to think that the inanimate elements of Doctor Who are equally valid in their purporting to be real.

Take *Invasion of the Dinosaurs* as an example, in which a deserted London (actually a fully-populated one filmed on early Sunday mornings) has been invaded by dinosaurs as a ploy by scheming scientists (Peter Miles and Martin Jarvis) and is being bravely defended by the military (Nicholas Courtney, Richard Franklin, Elisabeth Sladen and Jon Pertwee among them). With so many famous names flying around, and such an improbable storyline, people complain about the monsters! They have stumbled across the 'Belief Barrier' — able and willing to take on board the science fiction concepts and the faces of recognisable actors, they find it difficult to do the same with unconvincing special effects.

Of course, it can be argued that in Doctor Who (and for that matter, all television) we are striving for an overall 'look', and impression that truth is being conveyed. Whilst agreeing with this, and acknowledging that it's nice when it happens well (as in *Black Orchid*, perhaps, or some of the less demanding SF stories), I find it worrying that the techniques and traditions of live theatre are being all-too-often thrown aside and forgotten. I think it's time enough to use ourselves as instruments of the storytelling process, as we did when we were children — to 'make believe' that what we are watching is real. We do it enough when reading books (and Who fans are now being called upon to do it more with the 'New Adventures' series).



At the end of *Terror of the Zygons* (and this is an old wound very similar to that of the previous story cited) I don't find it a chore, after the build-up of three and three-quarter episodes' worth of competent plotting and acting, to believe that what pops its CSO head from the Thames is a real threat to the Doctor, Harry, Sarah and the whole city. So my mind doesn't do a double-take at the Skaresen and think "Oh blast, another story totally ruined", instead it blots out the poor effect, in a manner which is probably akin to the workings of Douglas Adams' SEPs in Life, the Universe and Everything. And the tale remains a tale of how the Zygons really did attempt to rule the earth with their pet cyborg monster.

Advocates of this viewpoint may be judged as too uncritical, and yes, there may well be a fine link between that and being over-critical. Some fiascos, and I'm sure everyone can think of at least three in Doctor Who's long history, shouldn't have occurred, otherwise by their standards we really would be faced with sets of cardboard, string and the inside of loo rolls. But when in *The Sunmakers* the sets wobble, in the *The Nightmare of Eden* the zips of the Mandrell bodies show, the console room in *Battlefield* is plainly little more than a lit backdrop, and the Skarasen lifts its eye-rolling head to say "Hello!", shouldn't it just be a case of ignoring such quirks and getting on with the story?

After all, let's look at the facts : the Doctor is 900 years old, the TARDIS is bigger on the inside than on the outside, Bonnie Langford was in another life called Melanie Bush, UNIT was formed in 1975 to fight off numerous alien attacks, three years ago there were Cybermen in London ... Now who but a bunch of highly-trained imagination users would believe *that*?

MICHAEL E.P. STEVENS

THE DEBORAH WATLING INTERVIEW

CURRENTLY ON TOUR WITH THE FARCICAL STAGE PLAY 'RUN FOR YOUR WIFE', D W B CAUGHT UP WITH THE EFFERVESCENT DEBORAH WATLING DURING ITS RUN AT WORTHING IN SUSSEX. THIS INTERVIEW WAS CONDUCTED BY GARY LEIGH IN ASHURST ON JUNE 13th...

DWB: Debbie, you were literally born into a life of acting weren't you?

My mother, Pat Hicks, was an actress before she married my father, Jack, after which she gave this up to concentrate on the family. As well as my father there is my elder sister, Dilys, and my brother Giles. The autumn crocus in the family is Nicola. She started to go into the theatre, then she got married and had kids, but she keeps her hand in in case she wants to get back full time.

Were you encouraged to pursue an acting career or did you naturally want to follow in your parents footsteps?

I wasn't encouraged and I wasn't discouraged, but my father really wanted one of his children, if not all of his children, to be something "sensible", like a doctor. Of course none of us did, but if you grow up in an acting family you think that's the norm. I didn't think there was anything different in dad going to the studios where my friends' fathers went to the office.

Your first television rôle in 'The Invisible Man' in 1958 at the age of ten led to you being cast in 'William Tell'. How did that come about?

We were shooting **The Invisible Man** in Elstree and they were doing **William Tell** in the next studio. I had a week out and they needed a young girl for **William Tell**, and they said 'Let's lift Deborah Watling from **The Invisible Man** for this week and put her on **William Tell**', which they did, and I think it was Philip Conrad who played the lead in that.

You were in the entire first season and most of the second season of 'The Invisible Man'.

That took about a year to do. I was very young but it was fun. I got off school, which was terrific, and I had two chaperons and I had to have two hours of lessons a day, which of course I hated. I always hated school! All the prop men were on my side so when it was time to be tutored they used to hide me in the skips and things like that so these poor women couldn't find me. I went through three chaperons - one left and two had nervous breakdowns. I was a minx!

Do you remember the photocall when they took you around London?

I think it was for publicity; a ten-year-old girl walking around with a man with no head. I thought it was the funniest thing ever - I couldn't stop giggling!

Your first major rôle, at the age of seventeen, was in The Life Of Lewis Carroll.

I did a few TVs before that, but Alice was the first major one. In fact it was one of my first TVs after leaving school at sixteen and I hadn't got an agent. Dilys and my father each had their own agents and they both assumed I would go on to their books and without telling me they both put me up for Alice. When I got the part their agents engaged in a terrible fight, each claiming 'She's mine', 'No, she's mine'...and I said 'Oh, my goodness, I don't like all this', so I didn't go with either of them.

Agents can be quite possessive.

Yes, horrible sometimes, but you can get the nice ones too.

Was it a thrill to be on the cover of Radio Times?

I've still got a framed copy of it! It was in black and white in those days and I am rather proud of that.

Prior to 'Doctor Who' you appeared in an episode of 'Out of the Unknown' entitled 'The World in Silence' which was shown on November 17th 1966.

Mark Eden was in it and I played the second lead, Sarah Richards, who was quite an advanced pupil taken over by a machine and all these strange words came out of my mouth. I don't know how I did it because I had flu at the time and I only had a couple of days to rehearse all these technical terms. I don't think I could do it now.

Just before that hadn't you seen Innes Lloyd about the part of Polly in 'Doctor Who'? Apparently he thought you were too young at the time and he suggested that you come back next year.

Yes, that might have been the case. I know there was a year's break and then we got back together again and I told him 'Yes, I think I'm ready now', and he said 'Yes, I think you are so do Victoria'. I forgot that totally!

Were you being sent for many auditions at this time by your agent?

Yes, quite a lot actually. I was a new young face and flavour of the month for quite some time!

Did you enjoy doing the futuristic 'Out of the Unknown'?

Totally, yes. I suppose maybe it prepared me subconsciously for **Doctor Who** but I wasn't aware of it. It was just a job.

You also appeared in a play called Calf Love around this time.

With Simon Ward and Warren Mitchell. Isobel Black played my sister in that and it was just after Alice and before **Doctor Who**.

You then appeared in an episode of No Hiding PLace titled 'A Girl Like You' which was transmitted on March 27th 1967. You must have literally gone straight from that into 'Doctor Who' because your first episode was shown just a couple of months later. Was it a particularly busy period for you?

It was terribly busy, but I enjoyed every minute of it. You're coming up with lots of thing and jogging my memory - you've done your homework haven't you!

Moving onto 'Doctor Who', Victoria was actually a hasty replacement for the character of Sarah Briggs played by Pauline Collins in the previous story. They had wanted Pauline to stay on but she didn't want to.

Oh! Thank you Pauline - I never knew that (laughs)! I haven't met her personally but I'd love to.

'The Evil of the Daleks', your first story, was extremely grand...

When you say grand why do you think that?

Well, it's gone down in the annals of fandom as one of, if not the, all-time classic.

What, that actual storyline or the era?

I'm specifically referring to the story itself, although the era is undisputedly recognised as the golden monster era. It just seemed to have a lot more care and money lavished on it, perhaps because it was the last story of the season and they had a lot of money left to spend.

Maybe it did but I wasn't aware of it at the time though. I do recall that the frocks were lovely and the atmosphere was terrific. There was something there, but I wouldn't say in opulence.

Do you recall your first day on location when costume designer Sandra Reid took you around the grounds of Grim's Dyke house to take these beautiful photographs?

That's right. She took me around the grounds and said 'Just walk about and I'll snap you'. I haven't seen these photos in years. Sandra showed a few of them to me when they were developed.

There are a couple of shots of you actually inside the house.

That was in the kitchen, although for the story itself the interiors were filmed at the BBC.

You appear quite relaxed in the photos, but were you nervous on your first day?

No, I loved it! I remember it so well. Gosh, it's all coming back!

When we last interviewed you (ref: DWB#34), you recounted an amusing incident involving Frazer...

I know exactly what you're going to say! It was my first shoot with Frazer Hines and he was rescuing me from the Daleks down this long corridor. He grabs me and his first immortal line he has to say to

>10

me is 'Quick Miss Waterfield, up your back passage'! He looked at me and I looked at him. I was very naïve and I said 'Ooh, you can't say that' and I called out 'Cut!'. Derek Martinus, the director, said 'What's the matter?' and I said 'He can't say that!' Derek said 'What's wrong with up your back passage?' Frazer looked at me and I looked at him and we got the giggles. This was my first day filming and Frazer and I just fell about laughing and we've been friends ever since! I think it was changed to 'Up your passage', but even that was bad I thought.

I shall tell you a secret now. I have a thing about charity shops. I actually refuse, even if I could afford to, to spend the money on frocks that stores are charging these days. I've got so many antique frocks out of charity shops, particularly Victorian frocks and even Victorian furniture. That's my era, I love it, so maybe 'she's' still about!

Derek Martinus actually directed you in more episodes than anyone else - 13 in all.

Did he? I know there was Morris Barry who directed the Cybermen; Douggie Camfield, God rest his soul, he also directed me in Danger UXB many years later; then there was Barry Letts, Gerry Blake...

He died earlier this year.

Good God! I never knew that. Gerry wasn't that old. There's another lovely man gone. They keep on falling off the perch around me, it's dreadful, and I think am I getting that old? Let's move onto a nicer subject. I remember Hugh David who directed my last story...don't tell me he's dead as well?

Yes, around five years ago.

Hugh David died? No! Oh stop it!

I think we should move onto a new subject entirely. Were you aware of any behind the scenes disputes around the time of 'Tomb of the Cybermen'?

No, they never came into the rehearsal room, or maybe I was just too naïve and wasn't aware of any. Why do you say that?

Because it remains a mystery why Victor Pemberton came in as script editor for that one story but left so abruptly. Rumour has it that a major disagreement caused him to leave prematurely.

I probably knew the reason at the time and didn't take much notice. No, I can't recall that one.

Peter Bryant also came in as producer for this story. Did you get on as well with him as you did with Innes Lloyd?

Yes I did, very well indeed, and if you're going to tell me that he's dead as well I'm going to walk out now!

You enjoyed working with your father on 'The Abominable Snowmen', then again in 'The Web of Fear'. Was it you who suggested him for the part of Professor Travers?

Yes, and he was very pleased and proud of me. What happened was we got the storyline for the next story half way through the one we were doing, so I flicked through it and I thought 'Cor, Professor Travers, dad could play that with a bit of make-up', so I suggested him to Innes who thought it was a brilliant idea. He was out of work at the time and I phoned him in the lunchtime break and I said 'Dad, do you fancy working with me for six weeks?' 'Debbie, I'd love to', he said, and I told him 'There's this brilliant rôle in **Doctor Who** called Professor Travers. You'll have to stick a beard on and go a bit white or whatever to age up', and he says to people even to this day 'The only person who's ever got me a job in the family is Debs', and he's ever so proud of that and we had a great time. Of course now if he played Professor Travers I tease him by telling him he wouldn't need any make-up today!

That would be a nice idea. Moving on, do you recall stumbling around the 'ice' corridors with Bernard Bresslaw?

Yes, very well. They put up this wonderful polystyrene cave which was meant to be ice, and shooting in black and white you could get away with it. The Ice Warrior suits were made of rubber with these sort of plastic eyes which you looked out of. Of course the actors got terribly hot inside these rubber suits and the plastic steamed up and they couldn't see a thing! In this particular scene I was meant to be captured and dragged as a prisoner into this ice cave, but after five minutes Bernie said to Derek 'I can't see in this thing - I'm all steamed up!' So I suggested that instead of being dragged, I should be pushed into the caves and I would whisper out of the corner of my mouth 'left, right, etc.' Derek agreed and we got to the caves and I'm going 'left, right...' and then I said 'Right' and he went left straight through the wall totally demolishing the set. We were buried underneath all this polystyrene and Bernie couldn't get up because of his huge suit and of course I emerged to see all the prop mens' faces thinking 'Oh my god, we'll have to build it all again!' Well, of course I got the giggles!

You were a real giggler weren't you but you were very young at the time. Indeed did any of the monsters or frightening situations ever get to you?

The creepiest thing was, referring back to the Cybermen, was this take when we walked through that great door, this arch or whatever it was, and they were all behind this plastic which was supposed to be ice. As we passed, one of them slightly twitched and moved and that sent a shiver down my spine, and then of course when they actually burst out of their tombs was very creepy.

Sandra Reid cited exactly the same scene when I asked her the same question. Do you think the Cybermen have lost some of their menace in more recent years?

I think the designs for the Cybermen then were very basic, not fussy, and it worked. Nowadays the design detracts from the actual monster you're trying to create.

Have you viewed the 'The Ice Warriors' episodes since they turned up?

Yes, the four of them, and when I watched them it took me right back in time.

Previously your era was, and in fact still is, very under-represented.

I know, because they've been burnt or trashed, but someone somewhere has got the whole of my era - I know it!

Do you enjoy watching your old episodes then?

Yes, it takes me back in time. When I was watching **The Ice Warriors**, I knew what was going to happen before it happened and we're talking about 24 years ago!

Do you think being made in black and white helped?

Oh absolutely - it enhanced it. In colour it looks plastic. All right, our sets wobbled sometimes, but my god did we create an atmosphere. No wonder those kids hid behind the sofa!

Talking about atmosphere, you were also very fond of 'The Web of Fear'.

Yes, very fond. Very good atmosphere. You didn't see much of the monster for about four episodes although you knew it was there because of the pulse-like beat. I thought it was terrific.

The surviving episode features the museum sequence with your father which was very reminiscent in style of the old Frankenstein movies.

That's right, absolutely. You knew this thing was alive in there. Wouldn't it frighten the kids of today if they saw it!

I've been asked to quiz you about the "knicker gag", though I don't know if I should...

Oh yes! There was a scene I wasn't in because I'd been captured yet again by the Yeti. Pat, Frazer and my father were in the mock-up of the London Underground in the studio and they had to go along the line wondering where I was, and all of a sudden Frazer stops, looks down and says 'Ah, look', and picks up a handkerchief and says 'Victoria must have come this way'. Pat says 'Yes, it's Victoria's handkerchief' and Professor Travis says 'Let's go and find her'. After rehearsing it they went for a take while I was watching and all of a sudden Frazer stops and says 'Look', and he picks up a pair of knickers. 'These are Victoria's, she must have gone this way!' Pat takes them and goes straight up to camera and says 'Yes, they are aren't they, yes she must', and my father grabs them and asks 'How do you know they're hers?', and the studio erupted!

Didn't Douglas Camfield get a bit annoyed?

No, Douglas had a lovely sense of humour.

You were absent for episode four of 'The Enemy of the World'.

Yes, one week off in a year is quite good!

Had you always intended to stay for one year only?

Yes, I always did. I didn't want to do the following year, I wanted to go to the Royal Theatre.

Didn't they plead with you to stay?

Yes they did, and I said 'No, sorry, I'm off', and I thought that was the right decision. They wouldn't give me any scripts to do anymore with the character so I thought 'No, I've got to do something else'.

You probably made the right decison because the following season's stories didn't make quite the same impact. Was it a sad day when you left?

When we got to my last scene where I was left on Earth and Pat and Frazer were saying goodbye to me, they were literally crying - they couldn't get anything out. If anyone has got that episode, those are **real** tears from all of us, absolutely shattering.

It was goodbye to "leather-lungs" forever, although you were approached to return in 'The Five Doctors' weren't you?

I was, but I was doing a Dave Allen show so I couldn't do it. I'd love to have done it, it's been a large part of my life and I'm very grateful for it and I loved my time on **Who.** Ironically the Dave Allen show was cancelled because he wasn't very well and so I lost out really on both.

You later did a couple of films with Cliff Richard, David Essex and Ringo Starr. That must have been an experience.

Yes, it was actually. When I got the call saying I'd got the part in That'll Be The Day, I was told to go to the dance centre because I had to learn to jive properly. David Essex and Ringo Starr were there and I thought 'Well, I've made it!' They were legends to me. Then I got the Cliff Richard movie, Take Me High, which was really nice but it didn't work. Half way through filming I thought 'This film is going to be dreadful. I think everybody knew it but didn't say it.

Immediately after 'Doctor Who' you were actually out of work for six months. Were you worried that you had become typecast, even though you'd done just one year?

Yes. I thought I'd got out in time but I hadn't, but I had made a bit of money so I thought I'd open a boutique as a sideline. However it was just over the peak boom period of the boutique era in the late '60s and I lost my shirt. All the money I'd earnt on **Doctor Who** - everything - was gone, but I thought at least I'd had a go and was positive about it.

Later on you did Newcomers, Powergate, Rising Damp, Danger UXB etc. for television, but mainly you've been concentrating on theatre.

I have, but I desperately want to get back on the box now. I was cast for a series just before Christmas but the Beeb shelved it. I had the second lead in it.

What area are you interested in?

Situation comedy.

Most comedies nowadays are abysmal. There don't seem to be any decent writers around anymore.

I know they are. It's a very very tacky area.

Would you look at the script carefully before committing yourself to anything?

Of course I wouldn't do absolute rubbish, but at the moment - because I want to get my foot in that door - if it was half way decent I think I'd do it.

Did you enjoy your recent convention appearance in LA?

I loved LA, but don't get me wrong, I only had five days out there and you spend two of them travelling and three days with the convention, so you didn't really see much. Every hour I had off I got someone to show me Beverley Hills, Hollywood etc., but for the Chicago one later this year I've said 'If you really want me to come out, **please,** I want to come out two days before the convention and stay two days afterwards', and that way you can get yourself together. Usually when you step off that plane it's straight in to meet the organisers after travelling for God knows how many hours and you're absolutely shattered and you go through the first day not knowing where you are. You're trying to do your bit but you just don't know where you are so you don't give off your best. American conventions do tend to be rather lavish, but with the UK events it's nice to meet mates as well.

I can understand that - no-one wants to be shown around Manchester do they! It's nice that you've still got so much time for the programme you left over twenty years ago. I'm sure the fans appreciate it very much.

I hope so. Every time I go into a convention I get the most wonderful warm welcome - I'm amazed they still remember me as Victoria!

Deborah Watling, thank you very much

PAUL GADZIKOWSKI defends a two-headed turkey from the mid-80s

WHEN DWB started its "in defence of 'clangers'" feature I knew I had to respond one day. My favourite Doctor Who story is *The Two Doctors*, and to say that in a submission to DWB takes a fair amount of cheek. (In America we allude to a less polite portion of the anatomy to say the same thing.)

Of course, the primary, obvious attraction of *The Two Doctors* is the performances in the title role(s). All it takes to despise *The Two Doctors* is a disliking of Colin Baker's interpretation of the Doctor, for with Robert Holmes' script Baker was given perhaps his only chance to work his interpretation on a classical Doctor Who script by an experienced and accomplished Doctor Who writer. Baker snaps, winces with contempt and gesticulates at Peri with abandon — and yet with precision. He is his own Doctor and no one else's, and I applaud him for that. I would like to suggest that Baker's apparent unsuitability for the part of the Doctor (to which I am not insensitive) may have been more a reflection of the majority of the material he was given than of his concept of the character.

The late Patrick Troughton captures the Doctor he portrayed in the 60s to a degree unequalled by his performances in *The Three Doctors* and *The Five Doctors*; this may be a function of either the Holmes script or the lesser competition from other Doctors, or both. Like Baker, in the script he finds the perfect material to develop his own particular role, from his ingenuousness with Dastari to his transitory alliance with Shockeye.

In addition to their broader scenes, both Doctors are allowed more introspective moments. Baker's "the smell of death" and "she can't comprehend the scale" speeches are as sensitive as anything Sylvester McCoy has ever said to Sophie Aldred. Troughton gets to exercise his range with his disillusion in his Timelord superiors in Dastari's office (Baker later got a similar scene in Holmes' episode of *The Ultimate Foe*), and in his concern for Jamie during and after the Sontaran attack on the station.

The companions' parts are about as good as they get. In their constant series of minor spats (which in *The Two Doctors* are real spats instead of mere motiveless verbal sniping at each other — review *Timelash* for contrast), Peri proves to be in the right as often as the Doctor; and Nicola Bryant looks as good as ever. Frazer Hines' Jamie is thoroughly his usual steadfast, headstrong, frequently comic self.

Like Troughton, Jacqueline Pearce also resurrects a role; her Chessene bears more than a passing resemblance to Servalan of Blake's 7 — which is not to complain. If John Stratton is a little over the top (on this side of the pond we'd say he chews on the scenery, but I wouldn't give Shockeye ideas), then Lawrence Payne's Dastari is wooden enough to compensate. The Sontarans were unchallenging villain roles, workmanly handled, though I think the actors cast were too slender and tall for Sontarans, but that's not their fault.

If there's a stock Holmes pair-of-characters in *The Two Doctors*, it's Oscar and Anita. Oscar pops in and then out of the first half of the story to provide comic relief, and pops in and then out of the last half to provide tragic relief, while Anita plays straight to both.

The characterisations alone were enough for this script to make me realise that Holmes was my favourite Doctor Who writer. (Perhaps one day I'll write in defence of *The Power of Kroll.*) (Perhaps not.) The plot, if not excruciatingly logical or intriguingly complex, is straightforward and keeps moving. All the characters have clear motivations to prod them from one scene to the next, with the Sontarans' xenophobia and Chessene's cunning to provide new plot twists when needed. The butterfly hunt sequence leads the Doctor (6) properly to the hacienda, while introducing Oscar and Anita sufficiently that we feel for the death of Oscar at Shockeye's hand in the restaurant later, and sets up the death of Shockeye with Oscar's equipment at the end.

Peter Moffat's direction is imaginative without being intrusive. The Sontaran's-eye-view of the Doctor (2) bent over the dead station scientist, and the slow swooping and panning through the station piping as Jamie stalks the Doctor (6) and Peri, are among the images that stick in the mind.

For noters of minutiae, Peter Howell's guitar theme for the hacienda scenes is nearly the same melody as King John's song from *The King's Demons.* The theme for the Sontarans is particularly evocative, and contains a short motif similar to one found in a theme from the music in the American mini-series Jesus of Nazareth — I will leave it to music students to draw conclusions from that.

Dick Mills surpasses himself in his execution of the sound effects. Aside from the standard explosions and machinery noises, there are such added effects, unheard by the characters, as the chime when the station body-scanner sights the Doctor (6) or Peri, and the broadcast whine when Chessene is calling on her mental powers.

Perceived flaws of *The Two Doctors* :

Some viewers complain of conflicts with the continuity of Doctor Who as established in *The War Games.* I say that, in a tale with a people who use the degenerative time loop as a judicial sentence, it isn't worth explaining away a little convenient amnesia in an 18th century Scot and one misanthropic fellow Timelord.

The charges against *The Two Doctors* of portraying cannibalism are unfounded. As was observed at the time by a DWB writer whose name escapes me, the term *cannibalism* applies only to the eating of a member of one's own species. Shockeye never proposes or seems to consider ingesting another Androgum. However, it may be hypothesized, from Shockeye's surprise that Terrans don't eat each other and Chessene's remark in reply, that Androgums do in fact eat one another. One wonders what social customs govern the interaction, as Shockeye and Chessene seem perfectly secure with each other. If Shockeye forgave Chessene too easily for subjecting him to Dastari's surgery, it was only because he'd filled his stomach in the interim.

A most popular criticism of *The Two Doctors* is its violence. "The Doctor would never kill Shockeye like that, he'd find some way to subdue him," critics say, usually going on to claim that this is symptomatic of everything that Baker and/or Nathan-Turner were doing wrong that year. Leaving aside that as an Androgum Shockeye well overmatched the Doctor in physical prowess, even if the Doctor were unwounded (which I grant wasn't played up as well as it might've been), I direct your attention to *The Three Doctors, The Invisible Enemy, Earthshock, The Seeds of Doom, The Sea Devils, The Pyramids of Mars, Planet of Fire, Remembrance of the Daleks* and *Image of the Fendahl.*

True, the Doctor doesn't usually kill his enemies with his own hands. Usually he blows up the entire mansion or space station or starship. But Oscar Botcherby was a butterfly collector, not a munitions expert. Since as long ago as his first trip to Skaro the Doctor has been a champion of practical pacifism over extremist pacifism. There isn't anything immoral about self-defence.

Though he regrets it, the Doctor is very often put in a position where an act of self-defence on behalf of himself, a companion, a planet, a galaxy, a universe or all of space-time requires that he take a life, or several; even — as the Valeyard once observed — at the expense of the commission of genocide or attempted genocide. Only once has he ever questioned this stand on his own part — outside Davros' lab in *Genesis of the Daleks.* Almost immediately he regretted questioning it, to the point that he later resolved to murder Davros in cold blood in compensation for his perceived lapse — an act which *was* so out of character for the Doctor that he ultimately couldn't bring it off.

What appeals most about *The Two Doctors* is its uniquely Doctor Who sense of wonder. There are few Star Trek stories, Blake's 7 episodes or paperback space operas that couldn't be adapted into Doctor Who serials. Similarly, there are few Doctor Who stories that could not be edited to fit another existing or new format. (*The Gunfighters* — in which Lawrence Payne played Johnny Ringo — is only one of the many Doctor Who plots that bear a resemblance to a story used in Star Trek, in this case *Spectre of the Gun.*) But *The Two Doctors* is not one of them.

Here we have almost everything that makes Doctor Who special, in one story. In the background there are the ubiquitous Timelords, unseen but omnipresent in the machinations, real or imagined. In the foreground there are the Doctors, both characterisations faithful to the single character and yet appropriately unique to their own incarnations; and what other hero is there who changes so greatly with the passage of time that he cannot recognise himself at a different point in the timestream of his adult life? With the Doctor are his companions, who manage in only two characters to personify the gamut of them all, from the pretty screamer to the able warrior. And there are new and old aliens to intrigue us.

Of those Doctor Who stories that could have been told only by Doctor Who, *The Two Doctors* is, in my opinion, the best. It remains my all-time favourite. My only gripe is that the Two Doctors themselves aren't together on screen long enough; and I wish that I could make out what it is that the Doctor barks at himself when he first meets.

DRAMA SCRIPTS: CLASSIFIED LIST

In the first of a fascinating series based on filed information stored at the recently defunct BBC Script Unit, we list the authors originally commissioned for each season of Doctor Who

DURING THE mid 1960s, the BBC started producing an internal reference list detailing which writers were engaged on what projects. The Drama Scripts Classified List was circulated two or three times a year and was designed as an aid to heads of departments and production offices so that people could tell at a glance what various writers were up to at any given time. Until the demise of the BBC Drama Script Library, a nearly full set of the Classified List existed on its shelves at its North Acton offices, dating back to October 1965. These contain details on all but the first two years of Doctor Who and, although the Classified List was never designed to be definitive, it did contain a sizeable amount of hitherto unknown information.

The list below gives an indication on how early or late some scripts came in, and it also contains names that never made it to the screen at all. The omissions — and there are several — are probably due to writers being called in at the very last minute, but the real surprise is just how far John Nathan-Turner cast his net in order to find new writers for the show. It is interesting to see just how many people were asked to submit sample episodes, story lines and scene breakdowns during his tenure.

I have laid out the table as close to the original as possible. All the annotations are from the Classified List and the dates given were taken from the circulation list attached to the fronts of the documents.

12th October 1965

Story Editor : Donald Tosh

Writers : Donald Cotton
Paul Erickson
Brian Hayles
John Lucarotti
Terry Nation
Dennis Spooner

29th April 1966

Story Editor : Gerry Davis

Writers : Ian Stuart Black
Donald Cotton
Brian Hayles

4th August 1966

Story Editor : Gerry Davis

Writers : Brian Hayles
Donald Cotton
David Whitaker

8th November 1966

Story Editor : Gerry Davis

Writers : William Emms
Elwyn Jones
Geoffrey Orme

3rd March 1967

Story Editor : Gerry Davis

Writers : Ian Stuart Black
David Ellis & Malcolm Hulke
William Emms
Kit Pedler
David Whitaker

14th November 1967

Story Editor : Peter Bryant

Writers : Mervyn Haisman & Henry Lincoln
Brian Hayles
Kit Pedler
Victor Pemberton
David Whitaker

20th Februrary 1968

Story Editor : Derrick Sherwin

Writers : Mervyn Haisman & Henry Lincoln
Peter Ling
Kit Pedler & David Whitaker
Victor Pemberton
Brian Hayles (storyline)

11th June 1968

Script Editor : Derrick Sherwin

Writers : Mervyn Haisman & Henry Lincoln
Brian Hayles
Peter Ling
Kit Pedler & Derrick Sherwin
Dick Sharples
Derrick Sherwin

22nd October 1968

Script Editor : Derrick Sherwin

Writers : Brian Hayles
Robert Holmes
Malcolm Hulke (breakdown)
Kit Pedler & Derrick Sherwin
Derrick Sherwin

4th February 1969

Script Editor : Derrick Sherwin & Terrance Dicks

Writers : Robert Holmes
Malcolm Hulke & Terrance Dicks

8th May 1969

Script Editor : Derrick Sherwin & Terrance Dicks

Writers : Robert Holmes (storyline)
David Whitaker (storyline)

23rd September 1969

Script Editor : Derrick Sherwin & Terrance Dicks

Writers : Robert Holmes
Malcolm Hulke
David Whitaker
Brian Wright (treatment)

16th January 1970

Script Editor : Terrance Dicks

Writers : Bob Baker & Dave Martin (1 episode)
Robert Holmes
Don Houghton
Malcolm Hulke & Terrance Dicks
Charlotte & Denis Plummer (storyline)
David Whitaker

22nd September 1970

Script Editor : Terrance Dicks

Writers : Bob Baker & Dave Martin
Robert Holmes
Don Houghton
Malcolm Hulke

9th February 1971

Script Editor : Terrance Dicks

Writers : Bob Baker & Dave Martin
Ian Stuart Black
Malcolm Hulke
Guy Leopold
Louis Marks (storyline)
Bill Strutton

undated 1971

Script Editor : Terrance Dicks

Writers : Bob Baker & Dave martin
Godfrey Harrison (storyline)
Brian Hayles
Malcolm Hulke
Louis Marks
Bob Sloman

11th February 1972

Script Editor : Terrance Dicks

Writers : Bob Baker & Dave Martin
Godfrey Harrison (storyline)
Brian Hayles
Robert Holmes
Malcolm Hulke
Bob Sloman

18th April 1972

Script Editor : Terrance Dicks

Writers : Robert Holmes
Malcolm Hulke
Terry Nation (breakdown)
Bob Sloman

14th July 1972

Producer : Barry Letts
Script Editor : Terrance Dicks

Writers : Bob Baker & Dave Martin
Robert Holmes
Malcolm Hulke
Terry Nation

17th October 1972

Producer : Barry Letts
Script Editor : Terrance Dicks

Writers : Bob Baker & Dave Martin
Robert Holmes
Malcolm Hulke
Terry Nation
Robert Sloman

19th January 1973

Producer : Barry Letts
Script Editor : Terrance Dicks

Writers : Bob Baker & Dave Martin
Brian Hayles
Robert Holmes
Malcolm Hulke
Terry Nation
Robert Sloman

10th April 1973

Producer : Barry Letts
Script Editor : Terrance Dicks

Writers : Brian Hayles
Robert Holmes
Malcolm Hulke
Terry Nation (storyline)
Robert Sloman (storyline)

31st July 1973

Producer : Barry Letts
Script Editor : Terrance Dicks

Writers : Brian Hayles
Robert Holmes
Malcolm Hulke
Terry Nation
Robert Sloman

22nd October 1973

Producer : Barry Letts
Script Editor : Terrance Dicks & Robert Holmes

Writers : Brian Hayles
Robert Holmes
Malcolm Hulke
Terry Nation
Robert Sloman

11th February 1974

Producer : Barry Letts
Script Editor : Terrance Dicks & Robert Holmes

Writers : Brian Hayles
Christopher Langley
Terry Nation
Robert Sloman

3rd May 1974

Producer : Barry Letts
Script Editor : Terrance Dicks & Robert Holmes

Writers : Terrance Dicks
Christopher Langley
Terry Nation
Robert Banks Stewart
Robert Sloman

8th November 1974

Producer : Philip Hinchcliffe
Script Editor : Terrance Dicks & Robert Holmes

Writers : Bob Baker & Dave Martin
Gerry Davis
Terrance Dicks
Lewis Greifer
Robert Holmes
Terry Nation
Robert Banks Stewart
Robert Sloman

5th June 1975

Producer : Philip Hinchcliffe
Script Editor : Robert Holmes

Writers : Terrance Dicks (storyline)
Lewis Greifer (Stephen Harris)
Robert Banks Stewart
Louis Marks
Dennis Spooner (storyline)

2nd October 1975

Producer : Philip Hinchcliffe
Script Editor : Robert Holmes

Writers : Christopher Boucher (storyline)
Bob Baker & Dave Martin
Terrance Dicks (Robin Bland)
Lewis Greifer (Stephen Harris)
Barry Letts
Louis Marks
Terry Nation
Eric Pringle
Dennis Spooner (storyline)

22nd January 1976

Producer : Philip Hinchcliffe
Script Editor : Robert Holmes

Writers : Christopher Boucher (storyline)
Bob Baker & Dave Martin
Basil Dawson
Barry Letts
Louis Marks
Eric Pringle
Robert Banks Stewart

22nd April 1976

Producer : Philip Hinchcliffe
Script Editor : Robert Holmes

Writers : Christopher Boucher
Christopher Boucher (storyline)
Bob Baker & Dave Martin
Douglas Camfield
Robert Holmes
Louis Marks
Robert Banks Stewart

19th November 1976

Producer : Philip Hinchcliffe
Script Editor : Robert Holmes

Writers : Christopher Boucher
Robert Holmes

30th March 1977

Producer : Graham Williams

Writers : Bob Baker & Dave Martin
Terrance Dicks

13th March 1978

Producer : Graham Williams
Script Editor : Anthony Read

Writers : Douglas Adams
Bob Baker & Dave Martin
David Fisher
Robert Holmes
Ted Lewis

29th June 1979

Producer : Graham Williams
Script Editor : Douglas Adams

Writers : Douglas Adams
Bob Baker
Alan Drury
David Fisher
John Lloyd & Allan Prior
Terry Nation
Pennant Roberts
Anthony Read

24th June 1980

Producer : John Nathan-Turner
Script Editor : Chris Bidmead

Writers : Steve Gallagher
Andrew McCulloch & John Flanagan
Christopher Priest
Andrew Smith

23rd April 1981

Producer : John Nathan-Turner
Assistant Script Editor : Anthony Root

Writers : Chris Bailey
Rod Beacham (storyline)
Chris Bidmead
Terence Dudley
Jack Gardner
Terence Greer (scene breakdown)
Peter Grimwade
Tanith Lee (scene breakdown)
Chris Priest
Eric Saward
Andrew Smith (scene breakdown)

19th November 1981

Producer : John Nathan-Turner
Script Editor : Eric Saward

Writers : Chris Bailey
Chris Bidmead
Barbara Clegg
Terence Dudley
Steve Gallagher
Peter Grimwade
Bill Lyons (scene breakdown)
Patrick Mills & John Wagner (1 episode)
Eric Saward
Andrew Smith (scene breakdown)
Lesley Elizabeth Thomas (scene breakdown)

4th June 1982

Producer : John Nathan-Turner
Script Editor : Eric Saward

Writers : Chris Bailey
Rod Beacham (1 episode)
Johnny Byrne
Barbara Clegg
Terence Dudley
Steve Gallagher
Bill Lyons
Philip Martin (scene breakdown)
Patrick Mills & John Wagner
Eric Pringle
Eric Saward
Peter Grimwade

26th October 1983

Producer : John Nathan-Turner
Script Editor : Eric Saward

Writers : Chris Bailey
Pip & Jane Baker (scene breakdown)
Christopher H. Bidmead
Brian Finch
Peter Grimwade
Robert Holmes
Glen McCoy (1 episode)
Philip Martin
Patrick Mills
Eric Pringle
Eric Saward
Robin Squire
Anthony Steven

Dr Who "Special" (90') : Terrance Dicks

10th July 1985

Producer : John Nathan-Turner
Script Editor : Eric Saward

Writers : Pip & Jane Baker
Christopher H.Bidmead (scene breakdown)
Michael Feeny Callan
Wally K. Daly
Peter Grimwade (scene breakdown)
Robert Holmes
Gary Hopkins (1 episode)
Ian Marter
Philip Martin
Patrick Mills
Ingrid Pitt & Tony Rudlin
Andrew Smith (scene breakdown)
Robin Squire
Graham Williams
Jonathan Wolfman
Paula Woolsey (2 episodes)

November 1988

Producer : John Nathan-Turner
Script Editor : Andrew Cartmel

STORM OVER AVALLION : Ben Aaronovitch (4 eps.)
WOLF-TIME : Ian Briggs (4 eps.)
SILVER NEMESIS : Kevin Clarke (3 eps.)
ALIXION : Robin Mukherjee
THE GREATEST SHOW IN THE GALAXY : Steven Wyatt (4 eps.)
THE HAPPINESS PATROL : Graeme Curry (3 eps.)

April 1989

Producer : John Nathan-Turner
Script Editor : Andrew Cartmel

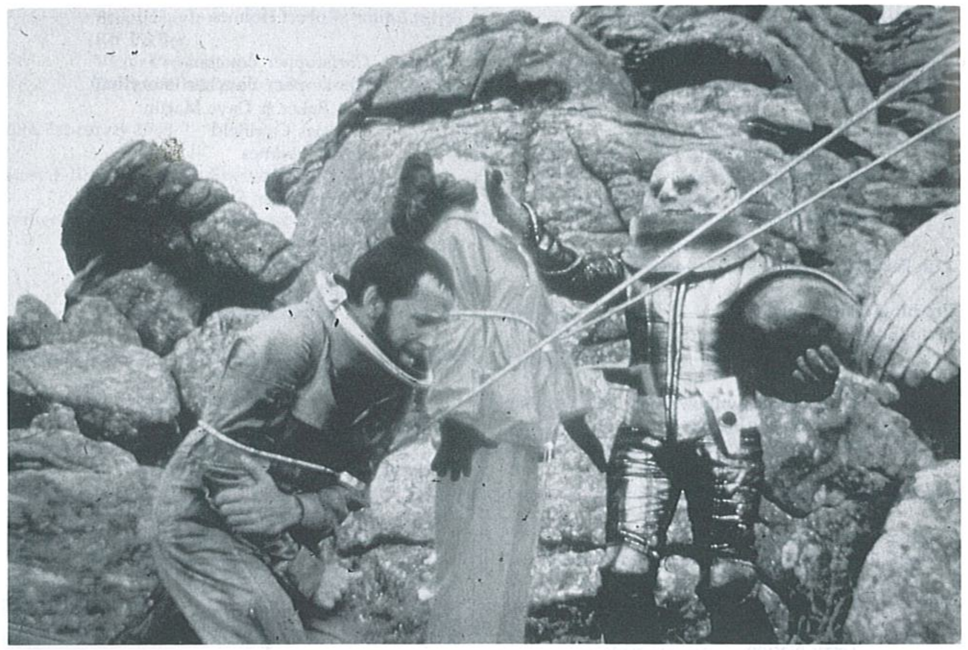
STORM OVER AVALLION : Ben Aaronovitch (4 eps.)
WOLVES OF FENRIC : Ian Briggs (4 eps.)
LIFE-CYCLE : Marc Platt (3 eps.)
BLOOD-HUNT : Rona Munro (3 eps.)

COMPILED BY ANTHONY CLARK

THE SONTARAN EXPERIMENT & GENESIS OF THE DALEKS

BBC Video; £20.99

PETER LINFORD believes that *Genesis of the Daleks* is vastly overrated, whereas NICK PEGG argues that it deserves its awesome reputation in fan circles, and more. Here we present both sides of the argument over a story that is still causing controversy sixteen years after it was first broadcast.



Peter Linford

THE CIRCUMSTANCES surrounding the production of *The Sontaran Experiment* are well enough recorded to be not worth going into here. The basic illogicality of the story may well be a result of this hasty drafting. Watching it, one gets the impression that Messrs. Baker and Martin came up with the idea of a Sontaran testing humans for an invasion and then came up with contrivance after contrivance in order to fit the story into the overarching Season 12 scenario (when *Robot* comes out this entire season will have been released on video — remarkable considering how bland it all is). Styre is on Earth testing humans, but there are no humans on Earth, so they write in a line to the effect that "the Earth is uninhabited — as we suspected". So why bother staying there? In comes a line explaining that Styre had orders to bring a ship down if he found no humans there. And since it was necessary for there to be at least some humans around for it to make sense for the Sontarans to be testing to invade against them, the whole business with a select bunch of humans retreating to the Ark in the previous story is made mock of. While they were sleeping the rest, we are told, "built an empire". Notwithstanding which, since the Ark was obviously within transmat distance of Earth, it's pretty damned silly that in ten thousand (or whatever) years no one has noticed it. And if people did survive from the Earth and built an empire it's even more stupid that it should have been lost in the first place.

Does all this make *The Sontaran Experiment* a bad story? Well, not exactly bad, but it's still mind-numbingly dull. After the superb Ark in Space we come down to Earth — literally — with a resounding thud, and spend fifty minutes waiting for something — anything — to happen. At the end it does: the Sontaran ship blows up (what a surprise) and we're right back in Barry Letts/Pertwee territory as the story ends with an explosion. Yawn.

But before we get there what do we find? It is known that the story provoked some hostility from weak-hearted viewers for its scenes of human torture. Is the objection valid?

Is it hell. There are no such scenes. Styre's experiments are of the most mundane kind and the only scene of anyone suffering actual physical injury, apart from in a stand-up fight, is of a man chained to a wall who later dies. Other than that, nothing. The duel at the end between Styre and the Doctor is fairly violent, within the expectations of the series, but it's a pretty crummy and cliched resolution, and in any case does the loss of Styre's report and the Doctor's word really carry enough weight to call off the entire invasion? Hardly. Also, it seems rather stupid of the Sontarans to have massed their fleets ready for attack before even knowing whether they were going to attack in the first place, since they didn't have Styre's report. Pretty stupid all round.

Technically, however, *The Sontaran Experiment* seems to be quite sound. I'm no expert, but there is quite a bit of noticeably particular camera-work, and the robot is rather good. The lack of studio work is conspicuous. We never see inside the Sontaran's ship, for example (indeed, have we ever seen inside a Sontaran ship?) but the scenery is very nice; a welcome change from the boring old gravel pits which return with a vengeance in the next story. One question which does arise though is why the Galsec crew speak with such stupid accents. And furthermore, why do these accents fluctuate so much? And why is it that whenever Terry Walsh does anything in Doctor Who that involves more than being a stuntman he always gets greased before the end of the first episode?

When the story finally grinds to a conclusion we heave a sigh of relief and hope that the next episode will offer something better. A look at the Radio Times (or video cover) raises our hopes, but how wrong we will be, for coming up next is …

REPUTATION IS a curious thing. Once established it very quickly becomes received wisdom, something of which there is an awful lot in Who-land, and received wisdom gradually, and imperceptibly, becomes what 'everybody knows'. *Genesis of the Daleks* is a fine example. For instance, 'everybody knows' that *Genesis of the Daleks* is, to use a grossly debased word, a classic. They know that it introduced Davros, they know that it had the Doctor sent to destroy the Daleks before they were born, that the scientific elite were analogous to the Nazis, that it has stirring speeches about war and presented us with one of Doctor Who's few genuine morality plays.

Also known but less commented upon is that it drove a Mark II travel machine through the established history of the Daleks and was the biggest continuity cock-up of all time. *Mawdryn Undead* has nothing on this.

Reputation is indeed a curious thing and it has clearly not looked at *Genesis of the Daleks* recently. I have, and can tell reputation with absolute confidence that the story is actually a pile of … *[excised in the interests of a PG certificate]*

What leads me to this remarkable and unorthodox conclusion? Well, there are too many things to go into all of them here and in any case a few will suffice, so here goes.

For a show that was originally, but now only ostensibly, about time travel, Doctor Who has a pretty crummy sense of time. A thousand year war? I think not. It may sound good but it's rather stupid, and it seems rather odd that it has taken the Thals a thousand years to come up with the idea of building a rocket, sticking a lot of explosive in the top and firing it at the enemy. The enemy in question's solution to its own problems is even more stupid. "Hey guys, our species is going up the tube. Let's evolve into something that can only survive inside a motorised casing." Ridiculous, and how are they going to reproduce once they've got into these casings, and where are they going to come from? And since Davros had bred zillions of the little meanies independently for the Daleks what was going into them would not be the super-evolved Kaled race anyway. Not that he probably cared but one of his henchmen ought to have noticed. Notwithstanding which, considering the number of perfect aryan Kaleds knocking around, and the not-actually-all-that-mutated Mutos, it was going to be a pretty damned long time into the future before they really needed to worry. Something else that they needn't have worried about was all the stuff about becoming the supreme race and surviving all others. Given that there are only two races on Skaro, and that they are unaware of, or at best do not believe in, the existence of life on other worlds, which they don't seem to have the technology to get to even if they did, it seems a strange matter to enter their consideration, although in actuality of course it is simply a case of sloppy scripting.

In fact, *Genesis* is an exhibition of Terry Nation's formulaic script-writing at its very worst, treading all the familiar ground of his previous efforts. Indeed, it can hardly be insignificant that the quality of what goes out as Nation's writing varies according to script editor. Under the assured hand of Whitaker, *The Dead Planet* and *Dalek Invasion of Earth* were fine stories. Dennis Spooner allowed *The Chase* to be utter crap, Terrance Dicks, no great writer of Who stories himself, gave *Death* and *Planet* the same treatment, and the only good bits of *Genesis* were written by Robert Holmes anyway (with a little help from Dostoyevsky). Like Gene Roddenberry and Star Trek, and himself and Blake's 7, Nation may have created the Daleks, but they are better left in the hands of other people.

Genesis was the season biggie, but at six episodes was far too long. Even the first episode had loads of padding, with a totally pointless escape-and-get-captured sequence with the Doctor and Harry that served no purpose at all and advanced the plot not one jot. (Note that, as usual in Nation scripts, the female companion has got separated by this stage.) In fact there is plenty in *Genesis* that serves no plot function and cannot even be excused as character development. Sarah's escape bid, for example, was a complete waste of time, obviously just in the cause of giving her something to do.

So what is there in *Genesis* that is good? Why is it held in such esteem? Well, Michael Wisher as Davros is good (yes, honest chaps, Davros was good at one stage); an excellent depiction of rational evil just itching for a prequel revealing how he came to be how he is, but equalling itching to be left dead at the end of this story. Also good is Peter Miles as his henchman. Dennis Chinnery as Gharman should have let his Who roles stand at this and not got involved in *The Twin Dilemma* nine years later, but never mind. None of the other characters are really interesting enough to care about. The token woman, Bettan, is blatantly that, since apart from Sarah she's the only female in the whole story and serves no function that could not have been fulfilled, and better, by someone else, and Harry does nothing throughout except feed lines to the Doctor, whose comment at the end of the story is another example of Doctor Who's somewhat reckless attitude to time. The need not to interfere with the Doctor's future exchanges with the Daleks (though we may still wonder where this story leaves them) means that he has to fail. So what happens? Bettan blows up the tunnel entrance. Cor, and this is going to set them back "perhaps two thousand years"? I rather doubt it. Even blowing up the incubation room doesn't alter the fact that Davros has done all his work and that can be reproduced, certainly in less time than it took him. Sloppy scripting or what?

Our earlier question about why this story has garnered such esteem has not been answered. To be serious for a moment, I suspect it is because, once Robert Holmes got to work on it, the story did try to be an intelligent and literate piece of television and tackle serious subjects in a fairly thoughtful way, but it didn't work. It could have done. Losing (at least) a couple of episodes would have been a step in the right direction (the record version tells the story adequately in forty minutes — that's how much padding there is), as would a more carefully thought-out background story as regards the history of the people on Skaro and their war. But this is idle talk. The story has come to us as it stands. Unfortunately.

Nick Pegg

IT WAS once pointed out to me that the first four stories of each new Doctor have held fairly doggedly to a distinct pattern — the first tends to be a piece of frothy, coloured fun to contrast with the seriousness of the regeneration, while the second is a traditional yarn, but under new management. The third is generally a bit way-out, an eccentric experiment in form, while the fourth solidly establishes the shape of things to come. The pattern is remarkably consistent in each Doctor's case, and Tom Baker's debut season seems to be the archetype.

The Sontaran Experiment is an experiment for the show as well as for Field-Major Styre. The first two-parter for over ten years and the first story shot entirely on OB videotape, it comes across in dramatic terms as a series of heavily stylised statements about where the show is headed under the new line-up. Conventions and expectations which had formed the bedrock of the Pertwee years are yanked from beneath the viewer's feet; the emphasis on such standard lines as "character-isation" and "morality" gives way to what looks like an experiment in pure atmosphere. Untrammelled by the need for complex exposition (because the actual plot is so delightfully nonexistent and silly), the story concentrates on generating a series of effects. The first episode is a model exercise in building up tension around the simple fact of an alien lurking in the wings, and the sense of predatory menace, achieved by half-glimpsed figures flitting between the rocks and such perfect *trompes d'oeil* as the Doctor's distorted face peering into the spy camera on Vural's jacket, eventually culminating in a replay of one of the most fondly-remembered 1970s cliffhangers. From then on it's the sheer cruelty of Styre's actions (although by time-honoured dramatic tradition it's the ones we don't see — like the "immersion in fluid" caper he mentions — which are guaranteed to arouse the greatest disgust) which advances the action. Sarah's genuinely sinister hallucination sequence is a rhetorical test-drive for the possibilities afforded by the Hinchcliffe standby of mental possession, and then there's the extremely sadistic gravity-bar scenario which predicates infernal torture methods later to be used by Styggron, Harrison Chase and Dask. While clearly a blatant set-piece, the Doctor's tussle with Styre is handled with a startling eye for gritty effect, and the net result is to exorcise the ghost of the increasingly camp fight-scenes that had riddled the previous era. It's one of the many admirable flourishes with which the rather wonderful *Sontaran Experiment* eclipses the aftermath of the Pertwee seasons and paves the way for Baker, Holmes and Hinchcliffe to get on with the serious business of producing a classic.

The fact that *Genesis of the Daleks* represents just about the first and last instance of Doctor Who genuinely addressing the moral, racial and societal ethics of war is perhaps unsurprising given the mood of the times in which it was made. In 1975 the first significant ground-gaining by the British National Front was forcing the issue of racial supremacism onto the centre of the cultural stage. More significantly, this was the period in which servicemen home form the disastrous aftermath of Vietnam were shattering romantic notions of war with their horrific tales of torture chamber barbarity (on both sides of the battle-lines) and such standard practices as ripping weapons and gas-masks from dead comrades in the heat of battle. When the first episode of *Genesis of the Daleks* drew a vituperative attack from Mary Whitehouse for featuring exactly such scenes as these — scenes which Whitehouse was pleased to claim were no more than the product of a sick imagination — it was immediately clear that Doctor Who was once again upsetting the cosy apple-cart of a Western world smarting from the multiple blows of Watergate and Vietnam and forced into an unaccustomed position of self-doubt. This wasn't the time for the gung-ho picture-book style of *The War Games*, less still the stylised cartoon-strip warfare of *Day of the Daleks* or the pretentiously schematised cold-war allegory of *Frontier in Space*. Two or three years later the desperate need for self-assurance was to reach popular science-fiction in the form of texts which proposed a justified recourse to arms and sustained the ethic of the good war; Star Wars and Blake's 7 both permit the luxury of a fictional viewer-indentification with a heroic Western (essentially American) guerilla force who tackle a technologically formidable superpower with hit-and-run tactics and a conspicuous ability to hide from "stormtroopers" — essentially, a common sense of guilt had caused us to reinvent ourselves as a Western Viet Cong. But in 1975, with a series of terrible moral questions underscoring the front page of every newspaper, such self-help tactics were some distance away. What we got instead was *Genesis of the Daleks*.

What is truly disturbing about this story is that the hardness of its presentation is matched by an intrinsic acknowledgement of the moral difficulties behind the questions it raises. It's never less than earnestly moral, but at no point does it attempt to proselytise theories of morality in the style of Star Trek or the morally primitive era of Doctor Who preceeding Hinchcliffe's. A refusal to confront this complexity is a significant aspect of what lies behind the fear of the arts which is expressed in the mewlings of all extremist philistines like Whitehouse. It's also the sort of thing that starts wars in the first place.

If Vietnam provides a contemporaneous focus, the design and performance styles ("auxiliary performance codes", as The Unfolding Text and *Dragonfire* have it) devolved from pop-culture conceptions of Nazi Germany. With a central villain constructed from the most lurid aspects of both Mengele and Hitler, flanked by jackbooted sidekicks and genetically engineering a super-race, the famed war-cry of "exterminate" acquires a novel semiotic significance alongside Nyder's attitude to the Mutos and an awareness of the Third Reich's extermination-camp policies for the racially, sexually and physically minoritised. *Genesis of the Daleks* translates the fascist ideology into literal (biological) terms and exposes the essential flaw of that ideology — once active, the Daleks respond to their genetically conditioned belief in their own racial purity and supremacy, and consequently turn on Davros and destroy him. But these schematic concepts are merely the framework of the action — which was as far as most Pertwee stories went. It's the way in which moral arguments are entwined around the story's structure which gives *Genesis of the Daleks* its heart.

For a Terry Nation script, this story is quite remarkably complex, and it's difficult not to assume that the original storyline was hijacked wholesale by Robert Holmes to elevate the character of Davros to the status of prime mover. If Styre was the last of the Pertwee villains, then Davros, the first and greatest of the obsessive, physically and mentally crippled Grand-Guignol baddies who were to saturate the programme for the next three years, is a template for the Baker era. Michael Wisher's performance is one of the high watermarks of Doctor Who's fluctuating fortunes in the acting stakes, and his pivotal position in this story is cemented by a consistently capable supporting cast (Dennis Chinnery's extraordinary vocal contortions notwithstanding) and, notably, by Tom Baker's first entirely convincing performance.

In purely material terms, *Genesis* is an exemplary piece of 1970s Doctor Who. As the last story of (the curtailed) Season 12 to go into production, it is also the first story which succeeds more or less entirely in casting off the last traces of the previous season's visual tackiness which occasionally threaten the well-being of stories like *Robot* and *Revenge of the Cybermen*. The only deficiency among the visuals here is the occasional over-use of the studio wasteland set, which clashes badly with both the style and the appearance of the lush — if sparse — film work, but even here we're a long way from the disastrous studio planets of Exxilon and Metebelis Three. David Maloney's superbly plastic camerawork delivers the goods at all the right moments, notably in the slow-motion massacre which opens the story and which, alongside the first strains of a pleasingly understated score from Dudley Simpson, efficiently establishes an appropriately apocalyptic atmosphere. The frantic climax of episode two provides a further opportunity for Maloney to exercise his talent for exploiting film to nail-biting effect. Generally, however, overtly visual direction is avoided, because, crucially, the story relies almost exclusively on dialogue to achieve its impact, and the writing is elegant and cunning enough to grip the audience tighter than any amount of flashy visuals could hope to do. The famous scenes are so meticulously written and delivered, and directed with such admirable economy, that they entirely deserve their enduring reknown. The fact that most of them are pinched from Dostoevsky's The Brothers Karmazov doesn't cheapen them — in fact, it adds another facet to the story's richly eclectic treatment of political and moral questions. "Imagine," invites Dostoevsky, "that it is yourself who are erecting the edifice of human destiny with the aim of making men happy and giving them peace and contentment at last, but that to do that it is absolutely necessary … to torture to death only one tiny creature … would you consent to be the architect on those conditions?" It seems unnecessary to point out the significance of such questions to Davros's fantasy of a killer bacteria, the Doctor's evocation of an imaginary child during his indecision over blowing up the incubator, and, ultimately, the Doctor's arrival — by a different route — at Davros's own conclusion that the Daleks "are the power not of evil but of good". The argument transcends the fictional universe of Doctor Who and becomes a commentary on the programme's cultural authority. The Daleks symbolise a unity. Their history and their actions are the distillation of a common fear for us as well as for the fictional characters they torment. They are a lurid representation of evil; death in pantomime garb. We need them. That's why *Destiny of the Daleks* was so unpopular with the fans — because it evinced a cogent analysis of the mechanics of their menace rather than displaying them at their fire-spitting best. It's also why *Genesis of the Daleks* is perhaps the ultimate Doctor Who story. What Mary Whitehouse could never hope to recognise is that when Doctor Who is as morally, as socially, as politically, as culturally aware as this — when the Doctor takes time to explain to his millions of companions why he has deliberately elected to fudge a mission to wipe out his arch-enemy — then out of the programme must come something good.

The final episode of *Genesis of the Daleks* was transmitted the day after America finally pulled out of Vietnam. Neither Western society nor Doctor Who has been quite the same since.

THE ONE BETWEEN THE TWO BAKERS . . .

With Peter Davison's era about to be revived courtesy of BBC Video, DUNCAN HARVEY examines the vulnerable character of this underrated Doctor ...

DOCTOR WHO is boring and silly because the Doctor is invincible, he always wins! This is one of the many criticisms that have often been made about Doctor Who, but I feel that it is a sweeping generalisation. Perhaps the most common criticism of the programme is that it has been rubbish since 1981, ie. since the departure of Tom Baker. This criticism is the weapon of the weary cynic, who, curious for a reason to explain the show's longevity, looks for a stick with which to beat the programme. These critics are the people who haven't watched the show since 1981; they may have tuned in but they have not been *watching*. For if they had, they could not have missed the era of Peter Davison, the vulnerable Doctor.

When John Nathan-Turner took over as producer, he perceived a major problem in that the crew of the TARDIS contained three smart-alecs: the Doctor, Romana and K9. Together they seemed capable of tackling and defeating anything without batting an eyelid. If anything did go wrong, all that happened was that K9 needed to be repaired. When Peter Davison was introduced as being the new Doctor there was talk of him being less of a superman and more vulnerable. Unlike the cricketing image that was also mentioned at the time, this vulnerability proved to be a characteristic that was shown throughout the Davison era. Introducing a vulnerable Doctor was an understandable step. Few actors could ever hope to emulate the mighty Tom Baker. In full flow Baker's quick-witted and even quicker talking Doctor oozed self-confidence in abundance. When Tom Baker entered a room he demanded attention and instantly got it. The viewers' total confidence in Baker meant that his Doctor could play at being a superhero and convincingly get away with it.

The much maligned era of Graham Williams showed this totally. Free of the restraining influences of Hinchcliffe and Holmes, Tom Baker's Doctor became truly a superman, seemingly never in peril and thus making his enemies seem quite insignificant and ridiculous. An example of this is the infamous 'stair climbing' scene with the Dalek in *Destiny of the Daleks*. But as mentioned earlier, the Doctor could get away with this when he was being played with the panache and style of Tom Baker. Jon Pertwee could also do the same, albeit in a more limited fashion. Where Tom Baker merely talked his way out of a situation, all Pertwee needed to do was shout "Hai!" and make a sweeping movement — hey presto, his enemy was reeling under the power of Venusian Akido. Such despatching of enemies was ultimately unconvincing and silly, but, like Baker, the viewer and fan alike trusted the third Doctor.

This is where I think JNT, Christopher H Bidmead and Eric Saward made the correct decision in deciding that the fifth Doctor should be a vulnerable character. Whilst in no way casting aspertions upon Davison's acting ability, there was no way that he could have simply picked up where Tom Baker had left off. This was realised and the new approach meant that Davison became truly the vulnerable Doctor.

Davison began his spell as the Doctor in a way that set the scene for the whole of his tenure. *Castrovalva* was the perfect vehicle, in which the Doctor was both uncertain and unstable. True, the Doctor had pulled the rabbit out of the hat by the end of episode four, but the subtle acting of Davison, combined with a skillfully written script, meant that the story was not the typical victory-over-evil yarn that had been presented in the later Tom Baker seasons. Throughout the better episodes of season nineteen, vulnerability was shown to be a much truer characteristic of the fifth Doctor than the much-trumpeted cricketing image, which only really applied to the opening episode of *Black Orchid*. Indeed, references to cricket in later episodes seemed to jar with his ultimate character rather than enhance and add to it. In *The Visitation*, the destruction of the Sonic Screwdriver contained the delightful reference to the Doctor feeling as if he had lost an old friend. This removed what had increasingly been becoming the Doctor's answer to Batman's infamous utility belt. The loss was even more significant because this time there was no K9 or Jo Grant to provide a blaster or skeleton key to help in those sticky moments!

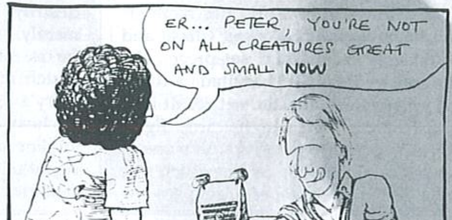
Aside from his final story, the highlight of Davison's era was *Earthshock*. This epic story needs little introduction and showed Davison's Doctor under attack in the TARDIS from Adric, under threat from the Cybermen, and ultimately unable to save Adric from destruction. The expression upon the Doctor's face as the freighter was destroyed said everything and more. The Earth had been saved, but at tremendous cost. How Adric's death ultimately affected the Doctor is hard to guage, but it is perhaps significant that whilst regenerating, the only companion that the Doctor acknowledged verbally was Adric, his fallen friend.

After an uneven Season 20, in which the Doctor was stalked inside the Tardis by the unwilling assassin Turlough, the Doctor became involved in a series of bloodbaths that led him to question his own lifestyle and philosophy. In *Warriors of the Deep* he can do nothing to avert the savage aspects of both the Silurians and mankind, with his final remark, "there should have been another way", packing a tremendous punch. *Resurrection of the Daleks* showed the Doctor unable to bring himself to execute Davros, with the tortured reply of "I lack your practice" when taunted by the evil genius. The Doctor was ultimately victorious but the orgy of killing had been too much for Tegan who left the TARDIS disillusioned with her travelling, leaving a shocked and reflective Timelord behind her.

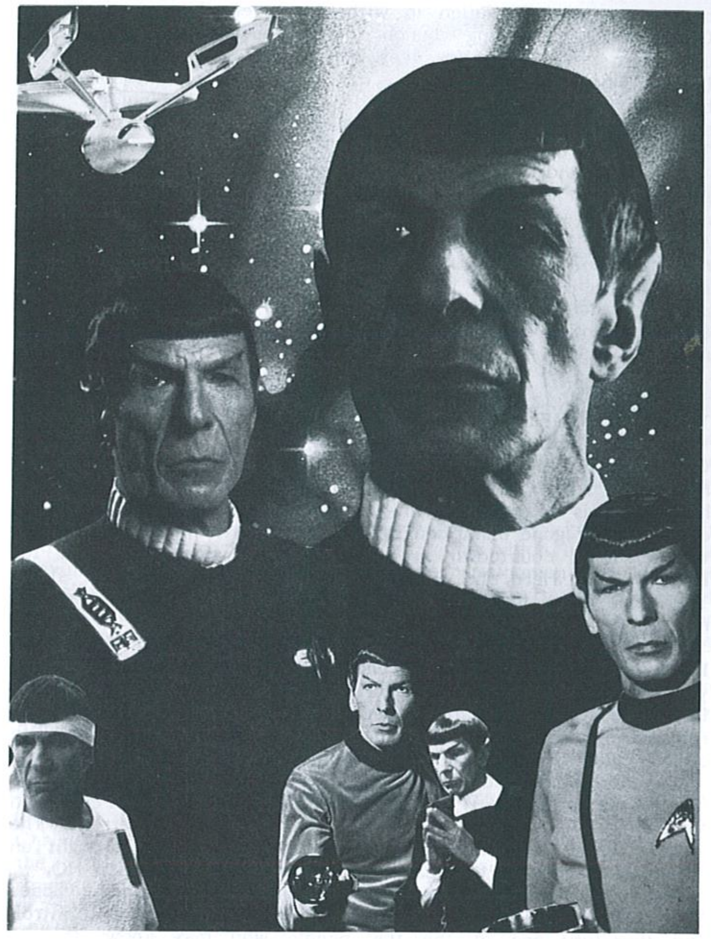
Thus it was perhaps fitting that the fifth Doctor should die a hero's death. After having stood helpless as one of his companions died, the Doctor sacrificed his fifth incarnation and won nothing from *The Caves of Androzani*. Peri had been saved, but the situation on Androzani Minor and Major had changed little for the good. The virtuous in the form of Chellak and Salateen were dead, and the new head of the Consortium was a woman who seemed unlikely to shirk from behaving in a Morgus-like manner in business. Although the Earth had been saved in Earthshock, with the death of the fifth Doctor nothing had been gained and only chaos was to ensue.

Pertwee had died to save his self respect, Baker died saving the universe (how else?); Davison died saving the life of a companion. The era of vulnerability was over. Above, I mentioned that chaos ensued. Following an overtly vulnerable Doctor we were presented with a Doctor who was manic, unstable and perhaps doomed from the start. In my opinion Colin Baker was superb as the Doctor, but I have my doubts as to whether the 'intense' style of his acting could have been maintained for many more episodes than were actually made without resorting to mere hamminess and painful puns.

With Sylvester McCoy, whose image as the mysterious Doctor has been created with all the subtlety of a tabloid headline, we have travelled full circle and the superhero has returned. Sylvester's Doctor can survive head-on motorcycle crashes and has proved that one finger can be a deadly weapon! He has also practised Jedi mind tricks and left me expecting to see the Vulcan nerve pinch! McCoy's invincibility is unconvincing because he lacks the presence of either Pertwee or Tom Baker. If Sylvester returns in Season 27 I hope that the production team will have constructed an improved character for him. They could indeed do worse than to look back to the vulnerable, likeable character of the fifth Doctor, and make the programme something of which all fans can once again be proud.


ER... PETER, YOU'RE NOT ON ALL CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL NOW

NIMOY TO BEAM ABOARD FIFTH SEASON S T T N G



THE BIGGEST NEWS at the moment concerning season five of 'Star Trek - The Next Generation' is that Leonard (Spock) Nimoy will star in an episode to be broadcast in November. Filming for the episode - considered to be a commercial move in lieu of the sixth 'Star Trek' movie, 'The Undiscovered Country', which premières on December 13 - commences on September 10 and Nimoy's pay cheque is reputed to be around $1 million.

Trek veteran Mark Lenard will also be returning to the series, reprising his rôle of Sarek. It is almost certain that this will be for the same episode which Nimoy will appear in.

With filming for the fifth season having begun on July, we can now dispense with the rumours which always seem to circulate between seasons. Filming for season five commenced immediately after filming was completed for the movie. This allowed Michael Dorn to fulfil his rôle as Col. Worf, defence counsel to James T. Kirk and Doctor McCoy in the film, before returning to work on the resolution of the Klingon cliffhanger, 'Redemption', with which the fourth season of 'The Next Generation' ended. 'Redemption II' (the title might still change) was directed by David Carson (who also did the acclaimed 'Yesterday's Enterprise') and will explain just who Denise Crosby's character is (odds are now on her playing Tasha Yar's half-Romulan daughter).

The first episode of this two-parter took some criticism in TV Guide, which has generally praised the series highly over the past two years. This time the producers were jeered for a plot not nearly as exciting as the Borg saga cliff-hanger of the year before. There is talk that the second part is similarly weak and that it went seriously over budget, which may force some trimming of location shooting planned for other episodes. It certainly increases the likelihood of more 'bottle' stories later in the season - the inhouse term for stories that take place entirely within the confines of the Enterprise and which focus on the regular characters.

The second new episode has also completed filming. 'Darmok' features Paul Winfield, who appeared in 'Star Trek II', as guest star. The third episode, 'Ensign Ro', introduces a new recurring character as someone who has finally been selected to fill Wesley Crusher's vacated seat on the bridge. A number of actresses were rotated in and out of that slot in the second half of last season while the producers contemplated the problem. The job has gone to Michelle Forbes, who actually appeared not in that rôle, but as Dr. Timicin's daughter in the episode 'Half a Life' this past season.

One change that seems to have been made for the fifth season is that Paramount is putting its foot down about letting so many crew and cast members try their hand at directing. In the past year, not only have Jonathan Frakes and Patrick Stewart directed episodes, but so too have Marvin Rush, David Livingston and Robert Legato from the staff. Paramount dislikes so many novice directors because this generally means more time spent filming the episode. So chances now look slight that Brent Spiner or Gates McFadden will get a chance to direct this season, as they had wanted. Jonathan Frakes has however confirmed that he has been appointed to direct episode 17 this year, though no definite word on an allocation for Stewart.

MORE NEWS ON PAGE 23...

ARCHIVES PLUNDERED FOR VIDEO GEMS

1992 LOOKS SET to be another bumper year for telefantasy enthusiasts on the video front.

After 1991's bumper crop of releases, which included 'Doomwatch', 'Adam Adamant Lives!', 'Star Cops' and 'The Flipside of Dominic Hyde' (just released by BBC Video), comes the news that other series are currently being dusted down with a view for release on home video.

Although no release date has been set, 'Sapphire and Steel' will be issued in the double-tape format although it is not yet known how the episodes will be apportioned (i.e. the series included one 8-part story and two 4-parters).

Also being looked at is Terry Nation's 'Survivors', and the BBC are currently contracting the actors involved, including Brian Blessed who appeared in the third season.

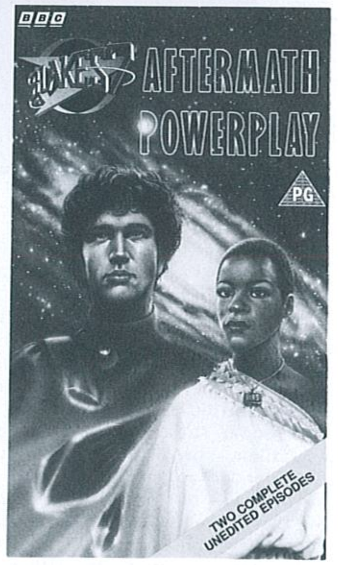
The BBC is also actively looking into its ancient science fiction anthology series 'Out of the Unknown' for potential video candidates.

Back with the independent labels, and a Gerry Anderson series due to get its first dusting down in years is the fondly-remembered 'Supercar', the series that preceded 'Fireball XL5' in order of production at A.P.Films. First shown in 1961, 39 episodes of this series were made in all.

Interestingly, the old black and white Richard Greene episodes of 'Robin of Sherwood' are also being considered, and it is hoped that a better job will be made of those than the recently-issued out-of-sequence and badly edited colour counterparts starring Michael Praed and Jason Connery, which have been drawing howls of protest from devoted fans, but more on that next issue which sees the return of our regular video column in the run-up to Christmas.

Printed right are the covers for 'Blake's 7's' 'Voice from the Past'/'Gambit' out this month (tape 10 is reviewed on page 18 this issue) and 'Aftermath' /'Powerplay' which is scheduled for November.

BBC
BLAKE'S 7
VOICE FROM THE PAST
GAMBIT
PG
TWO COMPLETE UNEDITED EPISODES



BRIEFLY...

RED DWARF V is entering production for another season of futuristic mayhem on BBC2, which is fast establishing itself as the home for any science-fiction broadcast by the Corporation. While the mother channel caters for Neighbours, game show and inane sit-com fans, BBC2 is lining up an autumn of programmes designed to appease the sci-fi hungry masses. At the time of going to press the second series of 'Quantum Leap' was tentatively scheduled to première on September 16 with a feature-length episode, with the series continuing weekly thereafter on the 17th at 9pm. Also tentative (so check your Radio Times) is 'Thunderbirds', slotted in at 6pm from September 20.

Recent editions of 'Star Trek: The Next Generation' have been postponed to make way for cricket coverage, not a wise move on Auntie's part as the latter has consistently failed to garner anywhere near TNG's ratings.

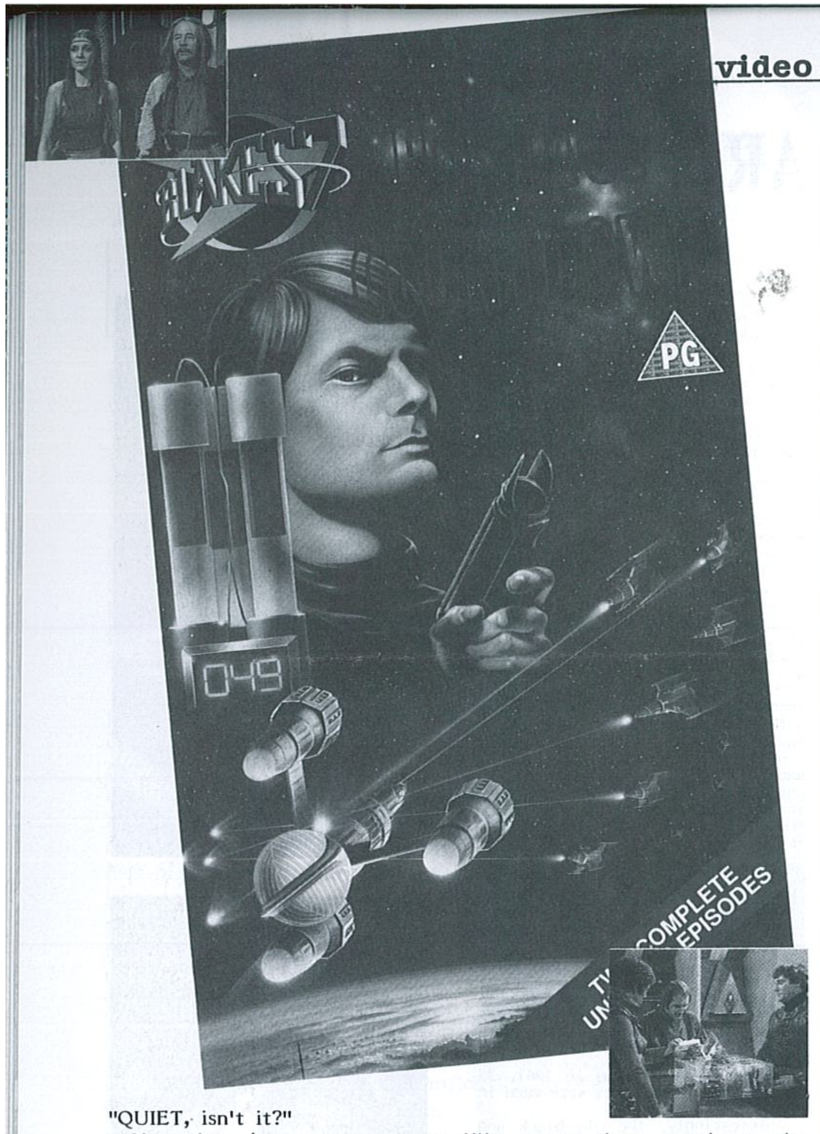
IT'S NOW KNOWN that 'Dan Dare' is the series allocated studio time at Shepperton, which DWM suggested could have been for a new series of 'Doctor Who'.

The popular '50s comic space hero from the Eagle comic has been snapped up by Zenith Productions and his new lease of life will be far closer in style to his comic-book origins than to television's other SF series.

A proposed budget of £4 million will enable Zenith to blend live action characters with computer generated moving backgrounds in the style of the original Charles Denton strip. This will allow the series to retain the original visual style that still makes Dan Dare popular today. The projected 12 thirty-minute episode season is a long way from being finalised, but nonetheless the BBC has already shown an interest in buying it up at £300,000 per episode.

AC

THE DIANA RIGG episodes of 'The Avengers' have sudden taken off in France, and in a big way! Currently being aired daily on the state-run channel, FR3, the series - previously unheard off across the Channel - is even inspiring articles in such highbrow papers as Le Monde and Le Figaro, and a bookshop dedicated exclusively to the series has opened in Paris!



"QUIET, isn't it?"

You just **know**, as soon as Vila utters these words at the beginning of Alan Prior's **Hostage**, that all hell is going to break loose, and pretty damn soon. So break loose it does, and very effectively too. We are treated to an all-out Federation attack on the Liberator, and for a moment it almost looks like the former are going to win. From our vantage-point (with the added advantage of an on-screen countdown, no less), we see squadrons of Federation fighters rounding on the Liberator at colossal speed, with some rather spectacular explosions. While the principles give us their best running-about acting, the Federation Space Commander responsible for all this mayhem punches his console of meaningless buttons and barks at his subordinates. The subordinates in this case would appear to be a crew of blond-wigged TVS continuity announcers, in which case, where are the mutoids? Oh, these **are** the mutoids, although far more butch than the Glynis Barber versions.

Back on the Liberator, some quick thinking and a handy cloud of ionised particles saves **Blake's Seven** from being somewhat lessened in numbers. There is a lull after the storm, so much so that Vila falls asleep, and almost misses a Vis-Play message from Travis. Travis tells Blake that he too is now a fugitive from the Federation, and that he has Blake's cousin Inga prisoner on the planet Exbar. From this point forward, it becomes clear that the whole episode is a re-run of the old Wild West scenario. The villain, in the black hat, kidnaps the prospector's daughter and the good guy, in the white hat, rides in with his magnificent seven to save the day, falling in love with the prospector's daughter in the meantime. I am inclined to stop before I tell you the whole plot, but whoops, that was it.

For "the old West" read "the planet Exbar", or, if you prefer, "the old quarry north of Ealing". Blake, we learn, has been on a family excursion to Exbar when he was younger, which reduces the terrifying prospect of intergalactic travel to the level of the average awayday. Blake and Inga are not exactly kissing cousins, but they're certainly not far off.

Back in her office, Servalan is after blood for the failed attack, and she doesn't care whose. She spits and snarls and prowls, and is joined by the galaxy's most unlikely leather-boy, Mr. Kevin Stoney, as Councillor Joban. Mr. Stoney is, as I write, still going strong, having appeared in a recent episode of The Bill with Kathleen Byron (Clonemaster Fenn in **B7's Weapon**). While Servalan and Joban indulge in a claws-out, camp-as-Christmas bitching session, Blake beams down to Exbar in a cute little atmosphere suit (and, would you believe, green wellies?) to make contact with his Uncle Ushton, played by John Abineri.

Ultimately of course things are not as they would seem: Avon is up to some double-dealing (so what else is new?), there are bear traps in the Buddleia bushes, and there's trouble in them thar hills. Also Travis is now looking a little more careworn than previously, prone to lapsing into Dalek impersonations in moments of crisis, and he's fallen in with some very bad company, the Crimmos, a slavering bunch of criminal psychopaths with unpleasant grins and shifty eyes. Incidentally, the then producer of **Doctor Who,** Graham Williams, was wont to complain about **B7**'s blatant pinching of his sets, and you can see his point in this story - Travis' HQ is strangely reminiscent of the rebel base from **The Sun Makers**!

The whole story is thigh-slapping in its subtlety, but unlike some of the more heavy-handed episodes it is at least enjoyable. As always, the regular cast carry the viewers' interest; Vila whinges, Avon is shifty, Cally has portents of doom. Most people who remember **B7** remember the series as a whole and followed it week-by-week, ignoring the strengths and weaknesses of individual stories. Which means that **Hostage**, as an example of the original cast performing on full power, at least deserves an honourable mention.

COUNTDOWN

THERE IS SOMETHING essentially dramatic about a countdown.

It is an inexorable and compelling lead-up to the big finish, when you either get a big bang or nothing at all, and sighs of relief all round. A tremendous gift for hard-pressed television hacks, it is literally script-writing-by-numbers. This fact has obviously not gone unnoticed by one Terry Nation, who endeavoured to include a countdown in virtually every story he wrote for **Doctor Who.** Here, he uses the countdown **instead** of a story! There **are** other ingredients to it, but as the title would suggest, not many.

The action takes place on the planet of Albian, where the Federation has the population under complete subjugation. (This is, yawn, another of Nation's allegories; Albian is the original Greek/ Roman name for Britain). Hidden somewhere on Albian is a solium radiation bomb, powerful enough when detonated to destroy all life on the planet, but leave the buildings intact. "Things are more important than people", observes Blake of the Federation's attitude (don't you just **know** it's a Terry Nation script?!). The Federation therefore hold all the cards with the ultimate deterrent. The Albians have, nevertheless, started a revolution, and brought an off-world mercenary to spearhead the attack of Federation HQ.

Blake has come to the planet in the hope of finding Space Major Provine, a former worker at Federation Central Control, and therefore one of the few people who may know its new location. (You'd almost forgotten the Central Control subplot in all that **Hostage** business, hadn't you?). What follows has incredible consequences for the Albians, and brings about a personal confrontation for Avon.

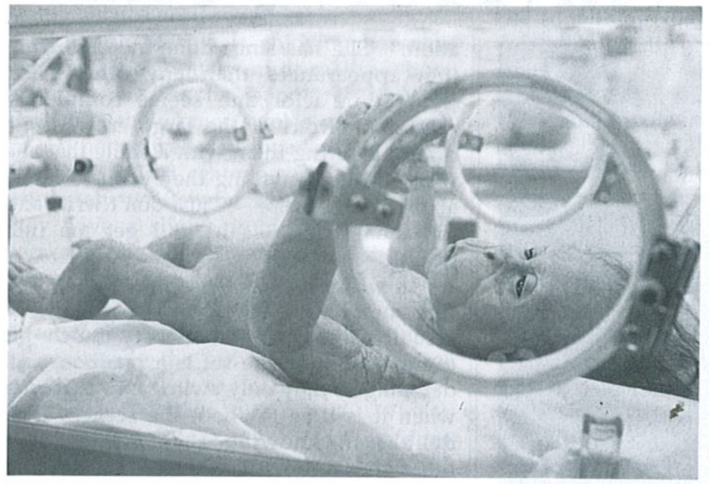
The plot involves a considerable amount of running about by all parties, and the overall effect is certainly nowhere near as bad as it **could** have been. Vere Lorrimer, who directed this and **Hostage**, again does his usual competent job. He directs well, albeit without the flair of George Spenton-Foster or Derek Martinus, but with an obvious feel for the filmed sequences (witness the opening shoot-out in **Countdown**). The cast has its usual complement of familiar faces, including Paul Shelley as Space Major Provine and Tom Chadbon as the merceneray Del Grant. I was not expecting much from these two, neither are what I would call compelling actors, but both do surprisingly well. Provine is harsh and cruel, and puts his own glory above the lives of the people of Albian. Tom Chadbon, though lumbered with the same kind of ridiculous stockinged balaclava which made him look so silly in **Doctor Who**'s **The Mysterious Planet,** manages to make Del Grant one of the more believable characters in the series. There are some excellent scenes with Paul Darrow, which serves to do something for Mr. Nation's tarnished reputation. One possible reason why Nation was brought in for this story in the first place is the considerable amount of attention paid to Avon's character, in particular his life before he joined Blake and especially his relationship with Anna Grant (which forms an integral part of the **Rumours of Death** episode in the third season).

By this point it was probably clear to the production team that Blake was not going to last past the end of the season, so Avon was being built up and groomed to take Blake's place, and who better to fill in the background on his character than the man who conceived it?

I won't give away the ending to **Countdown**, except to say that Blake and the crew receive yet another clue to the location of the mysterious Central Control, now known cryptically as Star One. They are to seek out the man called Docholli. And that's where the story **really** starts...

DAVID MILLER

CHIMERA



UNFORTUNATELY, I'm probably not the best person to review 'Chimera', the four-part scientific thriller produced by Zenith for Anglia which has just concluded its Sunday evening primetime run on the ITV network.

It was not particularly bad, but nor particularly good either. It will be the sort of thing in years to come which I shall vaguely remember being 'the one about the ape/human hybrid', but actually recall with as much detail as remains with me now about The One Game, a fantasy-thriller hyped like nobody's business for an ITV network screening some years ago which also failed to be anything new.

Now this is not suggesting that **Chimera** has nothing to recommend it. Indeed much of the casting was excellent, notably Kenneth Cranham, David Calder and George Costigan - the latter at his wild-eyed best in the terribly underused rôle of Yorkshire's Miami Vice representative. The direction too was very good from Lawrence Gordon Clark, a noted TV veteran who delivered the goods at the BBC with numeorus editions of A Ghost Story For Christmas, and his work alongside cameraman Ken Westbury made the whole thing an exciting and yet sensitive visual treat at times.

And yet there is a nagging doubt in my mind about the format of the serial, and what it wanted to be. The press rapidly latched onto the monster aspect of the serial, and the creation of Chad, the Chimera of the title, was a masterpiece. The prosphetics applied to diminutive actor Douglas Mann were impressive, and Mann's body language and portrayal, under direction from Peter Elliott, were highly convincing. So if it was a monster story, as the title implies, why so little of the monster?

Uncertainty of direction appears to be rife throughout the serial. In many ways the sudden shift in emphasis between plot strands and characters were very brave. The first episode made it appear that the story would be centred around a young nurse leaving her rather nurdish boyfriend in London and travelling up to a remote fertility clinic where nightmarish work was afoot. It seemed that our little nurse would be the one to uncover the ghastly goings-on at the Jenner Clinic, and that David Calder was going to make a real meal of the centre's proprietor. But, at the end of the first episode, Jenner, the nurse, and virtually everyone else associated with the clinic - and indeed the plot - were lying in a bloody mess on the floor.

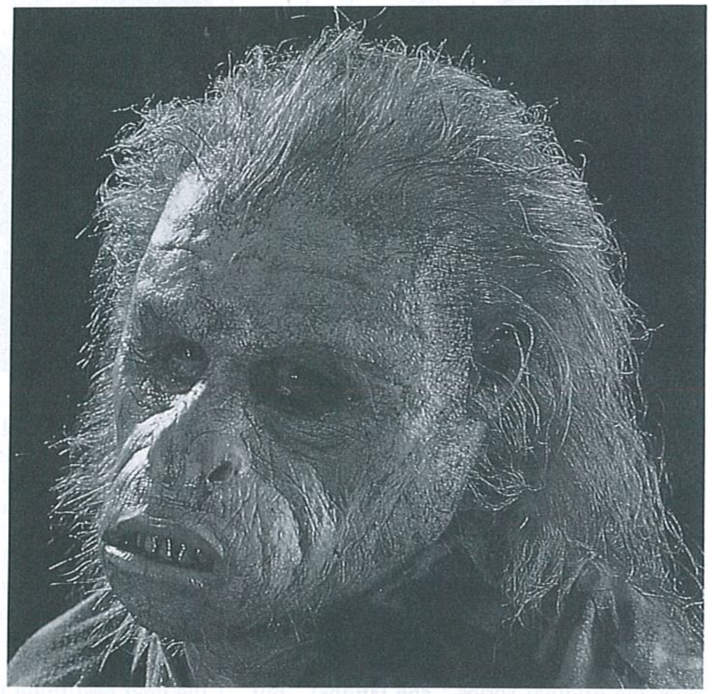
Now, to start with an almost totally new cast in episode two is very adventurous, but this next segment also took a shift from the scientific thriller of the previous week into what was a very standard 'manhunt' plot. The killer was certainly something out of the ordinary. This had been made clear to the viewing public by both the first instalment and the 'scoop' pictures of the popular press. Episode two seemed very reminiscent of the Holmes/ Camfield collaboration **The Nightmare Man** from the BBC ten years ago. But there the audience really was kept guessing until the last episode. Here, that the killer was an experimental ape-man of some variety was clear from the start. (Mention must be made of the appalling dubbing of the small boy at the farm - and one can only worry about how his **real** voice sounds!).

And so to episode three, which all but abandoned the killer itself, so central to the plot the week before. Whilst two local kids held a chimps tea party, presumably unaware about the hacked up remains of mum and dad in the barn, the nurdish hero suddenly found that **Chimera** had become some sort of political espionage thriller. With a videotape of baby Chad given to him by a supposedly gaga scientist, he was pursued by what one presumes was special branch, whose men show great expertise at jumping onto upturned garden tables.

Undoubtedly though, the final episode was quite a treat. The many threads that had been woven somewhat unevenly through the first three episodes came together in a climax that made full sense of all the characters and their motives. The flashbacks to new material from the initial episode revealed that the sole luckless inmate of the clinic on the night of the massacre, Mrs Forester, was to have been an unwitting experiment in Jenner's desire to perpetuate his genetic tampering. This scene was truly sickening, and highly effective drama.

Never, though, was it really made clear who the 'good guys' were. Peter Carson had been pretty unpleasant to his girlfriend, who had left him - and he was no conventional hero either. Alison came across as a cold bitch throughout, not the sort of person who would show the compassionate action of releasing the condemned Chad. Forester loomed on the plot outskirts after his wife's murder, and his indicated past was not a particularly pleasant one. Hennessy was a secretive government type that the army and security mob made jokes of and sent his car away with his things still on board. Chad writes 'help me', and then merrily starts butchering anyone in sight.

Although there were these conflicts of characters and an over-crowding of plot lines, the serial still embodied many fine sequences. The climax of episode one was unnecessarily graphic, but quite superbly executed in every department. The manhunt scenes in episode two were highly atmospheric and very gripping. Best of all for this viewer was the return of the widowed Forester to his quiet home, which equalled in sensitivity other notable post-bereavement scenes on television (e.g. Craven's loss of his daughter in **Edge of Darkness,** or the effect of Alison Carter's death on George in The Sweeney: Hit And Run).



Underneath everything else though, I felt the serial had two flaws. The pacing was poor, and whilst it may have worked in Steve Gallagher's original novel, here it gave four hours of patchy and uneven television. That said, with the tight schedule imposed by Anglia for the shooting in Spring 1990, it's a wonder that the serial was as strong as it ended up. There are also plans to re-cut the footage from three-and-a-half hours into two for a TVM or video version, which I feel would help the storytelling. Many times it seemed as if the wrong scenes were shown. Tedious contacts with informants in episode three appeared, whilst the encounter between Forester and the security teams is merely narrated briefly to Schaffer.

Narrative was the other problem. It had all been done before. I recall the effect that my first viewing of **Doomwatch's You Killed Toby Wren** had on me years ago. In 1970, that was very powerful stuff and new. Here there were very few surprises in store with regards SF concepts. The characters were going through the motions. It was clear from the start that Chad was to be shot full of holes, no matter how sympathetic he might end up. The only real draw was to find out who would be pulling the trigger, and why. Chad was almost a macguffin, whilst the other characters played out the episodes about him.

All the same, there are worse ways of spending Sunday nights.

ANDREW PIXLEY

ALL HAIL THE CONVENTION QUEEN

KATHLEEN TOTH continues her series on the stars of The Next Generation with a look at the ship's counsellor, Deanna Troi, as played by Marina Sirtis

COMMANDER RIKER probably does not realise this, but if counsellor Troi is sitting on the bridge fantasizing about a man, it is probably Jon Bon Jovi who is occupying her thoughts — at least if she has anything in common with Marina Sirtis, whose tastes run more to rock stars and motorcycles than the contemplative pastimes associated with the Enterprise's delicate empath. But the motorcycle is on its way out of her life since her boyfriend, rock guitarist Michael Lamper, was seriously injured in an accident last November while riding one. He still has pins in his leg and Marina is thankful that she was not on the back of the bike at the time.

But the self-proclaimed Queen of Conventions for the Next Generation is otherwise undaunted and feeling very fortunate. She regards America as her home now. She felt that way from the moment she first arrived in Hollywood, even though those first few months were very difficult. However, within six months she had landed the role on Star Trek — The Next Generation, a stroke of good fortune that eludes many actors in Hollywood for years.

Not that she felt very secure. She thought there was a very real possibility that she would be freed after the first thirteen episodes. "I called my agent and said to start looking for something else," she recalls. The problem, she believes, was that the writers were thrown by Troi's empathic ability. If she could sense things, that seemed to be an invitation to give the plot away, so they used her less and less, until it seemed to Marina that she was disappearing from the show. Ironically, she was not even supposed to play Troi in the beginning. She auditioned three times for the role of Tasha Yar, who was initially conceived of as being an eastern European ("not that we wanted to imitate anyone from the original series," she laughs). But then the director, Corey Allen, decided that Marina had an empathy that Troi needed and she switched roles with Denise Crosby.

This bit of history helps to account for Troi's accent — which is not Marina's own. Fans are always startled at conventions to discover that Marina not only does not sound like Troi, but that she actually talks with a cockney accent. She says that the way Troi speaks is not really modelled on anything, but does bear traces of the eastern European accent she used when she played Tasha. But then fans want to know why Mrs Troi doesn't sound like Tasha. Marina's usual answer is to smile and say it's her father's accent, but the simple fact is that given the pace of television work Majel Barrett "did not have time to learn the accent when she came on to play Lwaxana". If you point out that Marina already has an accent she laughs and says she was told "you have to do an accent because we already have a Brit on the bridge" and he's more important — "and never mind that he's supposed to be French!" "Actually," she confides, "we never think of Picard as being French, Patrick is so terribly English."

Of course, although she was born in London, Marina might not seem so English because of her Greek parentage. Her parents were very old fashioned, trying to arrange a marriage for her and then disapproving of her choice of career. To them, she says, "being an actress was the next best thing to walking the streets at night!" Sadly her father died before she became a tv star, but her mother admits now that she may have made the right choice, although she still pushes her to marry — something Marina plans to do once Michael is fully recovered from his accident.

Counsellor Troi is famous for wearing — at least after that rocky first season — what would appear to be a series of revealing fashions unlike anything else seen in Starfleet. It is a style that Marina matches on her own for the benefit of convention goers, whom she credits with rescuing her character on the series. Just as she felt her role was disappearing Majel Barret called her up one day from a convention in Los Angeles and said "you should see what's happening here". So off Marina went, quite unsure what to expect, and met the public for the first time as a Star Trek celebrity. After some initial fear she realised that people basically love the show "and that is a very non-threatening situation." She has since done more convention appearances than any other Next Generation actor and seems completely relaxed in front of the large crowds she draws, assuring them with a smile that she will tell them anything they want to know about anybody else — "just don't write and tell them what I said and get me into trouble."

As with all the other Next Generation cast members, she reports that they do actually like each other very much off camera too, and the set is a madhouse all day long as they only switch into character when it is time to shoot the scene. They delight in knowing that this is very unnerving to new directors — "sometimes you can see the sweat dripping off them." The craziness includes Patrick Stewart, "who is much sillier than you think he is," but at the centre is usually Michael Dorn. Michael not only does the best Patrick Stewart impersonation, he also does one of Troi "wandering the corridors looking for men." Dorn and Brent Spiner she regards as her closest friends. "There is part of me that is the Ear of Star Trek — they come to me with their problems, all my boys." The maternal Marina also extends to whipping up care packages of homemade foods for the boys to take home with them. Her reward? Well, she reports that she walked into Brent's trailer recently to find him putting her new puppy into the microwave.

All of this may make her sound like a considerably more traditional woman than, say, her friends Gates McFadden and Denise Crosby, but the difference is not so great. Marina says that she became the show's sex symbol "by default" after the other two women left at the end of the first series, and she happens to disapprove of beauty pageants, or any notion that Troi is on the bridge for purely decorative reasons. She is very pleased that Troi has finally got an office in the series, so we can imagine that she might actually be doing her job when she is not seen on the bridge. She was even more delighted to learn to her surprise just recently that Deanna is in fact a Lieutenant Commander, although her rank is never mentioned. "I said, you mean I'm the same as Data? Then how come I don't get, 'Troi, you have the bridge'?" She is convinced that it is because "there's just no place to put those pips anymore." Speaking of which, her green dress that launched a thousand letters asking if she had had breast implant surgery is about to be retired due to shrinkage and she hopes that she gets some input into what she will wear next season.

Of course, she has her friends back too. Gates returned in the third series and Denise just made a startling reappearance in the fourth series cliffhanger as an as-yet unidentified woman dressed as a Romulan. Marina was willing to say she is not coming back as Tasha. "She's Tasha's daughter in a silly wig!" Fans will be spending the summer debating all the alternative theories about who the character is, but writer Ronald Moore is maintaining silence on the subject.

Although Marina is enjoying her new stardom enormously and realises how fortunate she is, she is not reluctant to admit that the women's roles on Star Trek are just not as well developed as the men's. "We have a 24th century show that is unfortunately written by 20th century men. They have a slight problem with strong women." She does not think that the addition of Jeri Taylor to the writing staff will make that much difference either. One aspect of the problem is that all the women are essentially the same role. "Both Troi and Crusher are in the caring professions" and Guinan is "Troi with a hat". Why is Geordi such a failure at love? Where does he go for advice? To the barmaid instead of Deanna, she laughs. She is more serious about other aspects of the problem. She and Gates were both unhappy with the battle scene in *Q-pid* because they had to break flowerpots over the heads of the sheriff's men while all the male crewmembers were somehow proficient at swordfighting — the irony being that "Gates and I are the only two besides Patrick who could fence" thanks to their drama school training. So, she says, "it's a great job" but she and Gates fight about this kind of thing with the producers a lot. She was highly disappointed last year when the original script for *The Enemy* was changed. The first version had Troi stranded with Geordi on the planet and it was she who found and incapacitated a Romulan. In the final version Troi hardly appears. She smiles again as she recalls that she tells fans at conventions to call Paramount the Monday after any episode in which she does not appear and ask "where was Troi?"

On the subject of what gives between Troi and Riker, she is quite definite. "Jonathan and I play the relationship a lot, but it ends up on the cutting-room floor." One example was the ending of *The Loss* in which Troi temporarily loses her powers. She and Jonathan kissed but the aired version abruptly cuts to a shot of the Enterprise moving away through space. She does report that Jonathan is a great kisser with wonderful soft lips, but she does not like the beard. The problem, in her view, is that the producers think Jonathan is "the stud of the galaxy" and if he is involved with Troi while he is sleeping around, it makes her look stupid. She still laughs when she thinks of the "harem boy" outfit Riker wore in *Angel One*. "Jonathan thought he was so hot in that." Denise and she couldn't stop laughing. And what of reports that Wil Wheaton had a crush on her? She loved the rumour that they were dating: "It was good for both of us. He had that aura of an older woman, getting experience, you know ... and I was young enough to be going out with an eighteen year-old!"

She also has a complaint for the toy manufacturers. "I don't have an action figure, but the dead people do." She also laughs at the prospect of fighting breaking out amongst her fellow cast members now that Gates and Brent want to join Patrick and Jonathan in directing episodes. It is not something that she wants to try. "I don't want to direct — it's really hard work and your face doesn't end up on the screen at the end of it. That doesn't interest me at all." She would be more interested in producing her own projects, She would love to do more theatre — especially Shakespeare and Greek tragedy — but the prospect of Next Generation movies is also very alluring. "It means less work for more money and that's a very good concept." She thinks that prospect is very directly related to the fortunes of Star Trek VI, so she urges everyone to go see it, "no matter what you thought of Star Trek V." She herself had only seen one of the films and one original episode when she was cast as Troi. She has since met most of the original series actors and particularly enjoyed DeForest Kelly's controversial visit to the set. She says that she will avoid getting into any controversies by comparing captains — then adds with a laugh that "the hair department is about equal, but ours is more mature".

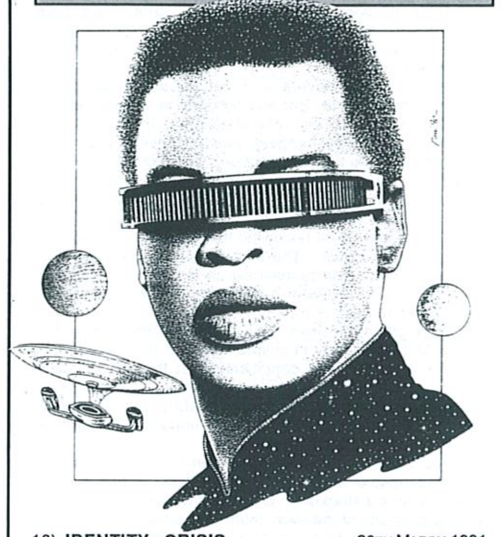
In fact, she turns serious when asked whom she admires. "On The Next Generation I'd have to say Patrick — he works so hard." There just is no time for the actors to communicate with the writers. The time constraints are such that nothing would get done if they tried to find out what everyone wants. "I just try to learn my lines and avoid bumping into the furniture," she says. "The only person who really does change his lines a lot is Patrick, but he makes them much better. I am not convinced that I could make my lines better, I am not a writer."

While waiting for the start of the fifth season she has worked in a film called Waxworks II playing "a sort of sixties vamp". She is bad and explodes, which seems none-too-different from the sort of film roles she used to get — she dies in Blind Date and Death Wish III. She says that she won't talk about the films she did before, "and if you've seen them you know why." Her favourite episodes of The Next Generation include, predictably, the ones with large parts for Troi, although she did not really care for the much publicised "steamy romance" episode *The Price*, but she also loved *The Offspring* and several of the Klingon stories. She joins many fans in feeling that the Borg were beaten too easily. Her most embarrassing moment was not the nude scene for *Menage a Troi* (she maintains that *she* was not completely nude but Majel was) but appearing as the Goddess on the holodeck in *Hollow Pursuits*. "I keep reminding people that it was supposed to be bad acting."

Marina plans to do a lot of conventions during the coming year and wants people to know that instead of bringing her gifts she would like you to make a contribution to an animal charity. Anyone who does so and lets her know will get a personal letter back from her.

STAR TREK
THE NEXT GENERATION

KATHLEEN TOTH continues her look at the fourth season of The Next Generation



18) IDENTITY CRISIS 30TH MARCH 1991

WRITTEN BY BRANNON BRAGA; BASED ON A STORY BY TIMOTHY DE HAAS; DIRECTED BY WINRICH KOLBE; MUSIC BY DENNIS MCCARTHY; VISUAL EFFECTS SUPERVISOR RON MOORE

The second of two stories to emphasise Geordi makes up for LeVar Burton's minimal presence earlier in the season while exploring a bit of the chief engineer's background in Starfleet.

Five years ago an away team from the USS Victory investigated the mysterious disappearance of 49 people from a research station set up on Tarchanon 3. The visual log of their search shows that they found no evidence of the missing personnel beyond some uniforms lying in the dust and no clues as to what befell them. The team was commanded by Lt. Suzanne Leighton and included her friend Geordi LaForge. Commander Leighton has now come to the Enterprise with the old records and a new mystery. The other three members of the away team have all disappeared or deserted their posts in the last few weeks for no apparent reason. One has stolen a shuttle after just passing a routine physical examination on board his ship, and was seen by a freighter on a course for Tarchanon 3. The Enterprise sets a course to intercept the stolen shuttle.

LaForge and his friend pay a visit to Ten Forward to catch up on what has been happening in their lives. It becomes clear that they were close friends in the past, Leighton treating Geordi as a "little brother" who came to her for advice on women. They have a few laughs over old times, but the Commander confesses that she is a little frightened. Geordi admits that he is too, but says that they can handle whatever the problem is, just like the old days.

Data gets a fix on the missing shuttle, but it is not responding to hails and is on a trajectory that will cause it to burn up in the planet's atmosphere. They are not close enough to the craft to beam out the pilot, Lt. Hickman, nor to lock on a tractor beam to pull it off the dangerous course. Picard urgently explains the peril and orders Hickman to pull up, but there is no response and they watch the small ship explode over Tarchanon 3.

Data detects two more shuttle craft on the planet's surface, but no life signs. The missing away team members seem to have disappeared as completely as the original Federation personnel five years ago. Riker assembles his own team, including Leighton and LaForge, to beam down to the shuttles. They find some odd footprints and a uniform, but nothing more. Leighton wanders off by herself and when Geordi finds her she insists that she can feel that Mendez and Bravel are here. She tells Geordi to stay away from her as she begins to have some sort of seizure but he grabs her and orders an emergency team to sickbay.

Dr Crusher finds that Leighton's blood chemistry is abnormal due to some sort of histamine reaction. Picard orders her to stay on the Enterprise until they can determine if this has anything to do with the disappearances. Picard is also worried about Geordi. Crusher says she just gave him an examination that showed he was fine — but that is what the reports said about two of the crewmen who stole shuttles and returned to Tarchanon 3. Leighton leaves sickbay with Geordi but she is anxious to find a way back down to the planet. He tells her to forget it as long as Picard refuses to risk it.

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Data has found some alien skin cells in the clothing found on the surface. He also examined records to determine that the footprints they found were not made by any known Tarchanon lifeform. Geordi and Leighton decide to look for some sort of commonalities in the old visual record — something they may have all touched or ingested — while Data and the doctor look for tissue matches with the cells Data found. The android denies that he could be worried about Geordi, but a sceptical look from the doctor prompts him to add that he is strongly motivated to solve this mystery.

Reviewing the old recording again and again makes the commander restless. She says they are wasting their time and should go back to the planet again. She grows more agitated and then collapses to the deck. When Geordi rushes to her he discovers that her body is beginning to show mutations.

Dr Crusher discovers that her patient is becoming extremely sensitive to light and puts her in semi-darkness, but there seems to be little else she can do for now. Leighton's cells are changing, becoming like those Data found. The people who went missing were not abducted, but were transformed into another species. She does not think the condition is communicable but she warns Geordi that the same thing is likely to happen to him. Geordi asks Picard to let him go on reviewing the tapes so at least he is trying to help himself. The captain reluctantly agrees as long as he checks in periodically to Dr Crusher *and* they have the ship's computer bar him from use of the transporters and shuttles.

As Leighton becomes more and more non-human, her skin exhibits the ability to imitate light that touches her. Dr Crusher comes to the conclusion that there must be a foreign body inside her producing these changes even though they have not detected it before and orders an exhaustive microscan as the last hope of helping the commander.

Geordi finally notices something in his continual replaying of the tapes of the original investigation. At one point he thinks he sees a shadow on a wall that would not seem to be coming from any of the away team members. Various ways of analysing the tape fail to resolve the issue and he asks the computer to simulate the scene on the holodeck. He walks into the frozen tableau, which includes himself as he was five years ago. He still cannot determine where the shadow is coming from and has the computer run the figures through the motions from the original log. Then he has the computer remove people one by one, along with their shadows, until he is still left with the image on the wall. The computer says that no object in the program could be the source of the shadow. He asks the computer to determine the most likely shape and position for such an object, making certain assumptions about its height. He is suddenly confronted by an eerie humanoid shape a few feet in front of him. Before he can do anything else he clutches his chest and drops to the ground.

Dr Crusher's search is rewarded when she finds a small alien parasite hidden in the thymus. It is spreading the new genetic construction throughout what was Leighton. Actually it is not a true parasite because it is not feeding off of its host, but transforming her DNA into its own. The doctor realises that there will no be no unaltered genes left with which to bring the commander back unless the alien tissue is removed immediately. Her surgery is successful but it will be hours before she will know if it was in time to save Suzanne Leighton. She tries to communicate with Geordi but cannot raise him and the computer says he is no longer on board. Yet there is no record of anyone beaming out and all shuttles are accounted for — the doctor warns the bridge crew that if he has been transformed he could be virtually a chameleon by now and undetectable by sensors. Since his last known location was in the holodeck, Worf's security team goes there but only finds a uniform. At the same time a nearly invisible intruder overpowers the operator in transporter room six and a transformed Geordi beams down to join the rest of the survivors of his old away team.

The doctor's research indicates that they have less than an hour before Geordi's transformation becomes irreversible. But they cannot locate him on the surface with ordinary scanners. Data must adapt equipment to use ultra-violet light if he is to be visible. While he works Leighton becomes much improved. She and the doctor now realise that the lifeform they have encountered plants a DNA strand in a living host as their method of reproduction. Leighton says she is the only one who can find Geordi now and warns the away team that light frightens these creatures. They turn off their regular beams once they have arrived on the surface and use only ultra-violet lights. They soon find Geordi and what was once the other two missing Starfleet officers, but they all run and hide. Geordi does not recognise any of his friends and Leighton says that he is incapable of reasoning now — these creatures act only on instinct. She goes to Geordi, trusting that some part of him will still sense that she is a friend. She asks him to take her hand. After a long pause he places his distorted hand in hers and they are beamed to sickbay.

There is no hope for the others — they have been completely transformed. But Dr Crusher is able to remove the alien tissue and restore Geordi. She asks if there is any hope of communicating with this species and both restored humans say no. Picard decides that they must then leave them be and place warning beacons around the planet so that no more unwary explorers become hosts.

19) THE NTH DEGREE

6TH APRIL 1991

WRITTEN BY JOE MENOSKY; DIRECTED BY ROBERT LEGATO; MUSIC BY RON JONES; VISUAL EFFECTS SUPERVISOR ROBERT LEGATO

Lt. Barclay, last seen as the inept social misfit escaping to an extremely rich fantasy life on the holodeck in last season's HOLLOW PURSUITS, returns as we find that the Doctor and the ship's counsellor have been collaborating in trying to bring Mr Barclay out of his shell.

In the ship's small theatre Beverly Crusher is playing Roxanne to Reg Barclay's Cyrano de Bergerac before an audience of their crewmates, complete with costumes and artificial nose. The doctor is a lovely and amazingly competent performer as Roxanne; Barclay stumbles over props and forgets some of his lines, but manages to get through the scene. They are rewarded with loud applause and cheers — to the disgust of Worf and the consternation of Data, who clearly does not think Barclay's performance merits such approval. Troi scolds the android and moves off to heap praise on the performers. Geordi is congratulating his engineering officer on how far he has come in only six weeks in the drama workshop. Barclay seems as self-effacing as ever and says that they have a very patient teacher, meaning Dr Crusher. The doctor mischievously tells Worf that she has another opening in her workshop, but the Klingon makes a rapid retreat from the theatre.

Troi also tells Barclay that he has made tremendous progress and has shown great courage in getting up in front of all these people. But Barclay is not so sure. He feels more confident playing somebody else — maybe this is no better than escaping into a holodeck fantasy. But the counsellor insists that it is. Whereas he used to withdraw and isolate himself, he now interacts with crewmates. She tells the sceptical Lieutenant to give himself some credit.

The Enterprise is arriving at the Argus Array, a remote unmanned subspace telescope at the edge of Federation space. The Array stopped transmitting nearly two months ago and the ship was sent to find out why. Data finds that the Array's fusion reactors are dangerously unstable and Worf detects a strange device nearby. It appears to be a probe of unknown design and origin. Geordi selects Barclay to accompany him in a shuttle to examine the probe close-up. Barclay is surprised but grateful for the opportunity and, on Geordi's commands, tries various types of scans on the alien object without response. But when they go to a positron emission the probe reacts with a sudden burst of high intensity light and energy that deactivates the shuttle's computer and leaves Barclay out cold on the deck. The two crewmen are transported from the crippled shuttle to sickbay.

Data says that whatever happened is not any technology they have encountered before. When the probe begins to move towards the Enterprise the bridge crew fear that it will cripple their systems too and begin to move in reverse away from it.

In sickbay, Beverly Crusher has examined Barclay and decides that the beam from the probe just overloaded his optic nerve and caused him to pass out. She takes readings for further tests but the results will take hours to process. Barclay, sounding suddenly very confident and articulate, gives her a lecture on how to modify the equipment to get faster results.

There are some surprises on the bridge, too. The probe has no known method of propulsion but the Enterprise cannot get away from it. When an energy field begins to form, Worf asks to fire phasers but they have no effect. They go to warp 2 but that overloads the shields and they must return to impulse power to strengthen their defences, but they are too close to use photon torpedoes — or so everyone thinks. Barclay's voice suddenly comes over Picard's communicator, informing him that it is now safe to fire photon torpedoes — he has found a way to increase shield power by 300%. After some hesitation, Picard gives the order to fire and the probe is destroyed.

With one problem solved, the task of repairing the Array remains. Geordi prepares a report that concludes that damage to the telescope's computer has caused all 18 reactors to malfunction in various ways. They will have to be repaired one by one in a process that will take two to three weeks. Barclay again intervenes and says it can be done in two days by using the undamaged computer core memory. Even Data says such an approach would take him seven weeks.

Barclay has changed in the drama workshop as well. He mesmerizes Beverly and the entire class with his performance of another scene from Cyrano de Bergerac. Troi is disturbed by this unaccountable improvement and asks to join him later in Ten Forward. He admits that in the past few days he has found a confidence that he never knew was there — and as if to prove it he asks Deanna to take a walk with him in the arboretum. Troi says that, as his former counsellor, that would not be appropriate. Barclay replies that he does not need a counsellor — he wants the company of a charming, intelligent woman.

Geordi is equally startled to later find Barclay on the holodeck having a little consultation with Einstein on quantum physics, and it is Barclay who is dispensing the help. The conclusion that Barclay has changed is unavoidable. For his part Barclay says that he has finally become the person that he has always wanted to be — do we have to ask why? His crewmates think so, and Dr Crusher discovers that her Cyrano now has an IQ between 1200 and 1400, and both hemispheres of the brain are working in conjunction with each other. She concludes that he could well be the most advanced human being that ever lived. Riker finds the prospect a bit disturbing, noting that Barclay now knows more about the workings of the ship than anyone else. He fears the possibility of an alien influence but Picard wants to know if he has done anything that could be considered threatening. Troi mentions that he made a pass at her and Beverly reports that he taught a violin class last night, and Barclay does not play the violin. While Riker wants to know more about that pass, Picard says he will not act against Barclay unless something more threatening occurs.

Barclay is allowed to implement his plan for repairing the reactors all at once but one of them begins to overload and a cascade effect will involve the other 17 within ten minutes. Barclay says the ship's computer is too slow to control the program he has developed. He has to find a better interface. He goes to the holodeck and begins to build a neural scan interface, although the computer has no idea how to do that. On the brink of a fatal explosion, the Argus computer suddenly regains control of the reactors and begins shutting them down. When Data asks the Enterprise computer how it managed to accomplish this, it answers with Barclay's voice.

When Picard demands an explanation "Barclay" explains that he was only trying to help by transferring his higher brain functions to the computer core. But now his brain functions have expanded to such a degree that it is now impossible to return to the confines of his physical body. Geordi quietly disconnects the computer monitoring system from the conference room so that the crew can discuss this new situation without being overheard by what remains of Barclay's mind. Picard finds it intolerable that the whole ship should be subject to the whims of Barclay's expanding mental processes. Data speculates that it might be possible for Geordi to manually bypass normal engine operations and get them to a starbase. Geordi goes to the holodeck, where Barclay's body sits motionless under the interface network, to try to talk to his friend, but Barclay is totally caught up in the new sensations he is experiencing. He tells Geordi that he can conceive of almost infinite possibilities, that he has been chosen to fulfill a great purpose. He will lead humanity in exploring new worlds that they never could have reached in their lifetimes. Data suddenly detects a subspace disturbance building alongside the Enterprise. Barclay is altering space in an experiment to improve interstellar travel and does not stop when Picard orders him to discontinue. Troi hurries to the holodeck to try her hand at persuading her former patient to stop frightening all of them. But he says that children are easily frightened and asks her to trust him. She warns him that the Captain will do everything in his power to stop him, even though disconnecting him from the interface would be fatal. But Geordi's attempt to reach the engines fails and Barclay propels the Enterprise into the disturbance he has created in the fabric of space. Worf bursts into the holodeck with a security team but space and time begin to distort as they make a quantum leap. The crew recover to find themselves 30,000 light years from their previous position — and there is the image of a giant face materialising on the bridge. This personage is making bemused comments to himself about their appearance. The crew is joined by Barclay, who announces that their visitor has "reintegrated" him. The being whose image they see represents a race of explorers who seek the same knowledge as the Enterprise, but they do it without leaving their home.

Instead of going out in ships themselves, they send their probes, which are programmed to instruct outsiders on how to reach them. But the alien programming was too powerful for the computers to handle. Instead, they were able to program Barclay to bring the ship here. These armchair explorers are somewhat startled to have Picard address them directly but they have the same basic desire to exchange information. The Enterprise spends ten days with them and is then returned to their starting point with enough information to keep scholars busy for decades.

Barclay himself appears none the worse for his experience, but it is unclear how much he may have been changed by it. He tells Troi that he remembers almost everything — just not the how or why of what he did. The counsellor says that it is possible that he will carry something from this for the rest of his life. For now she thinks they have a date to take a walk in the arboretum. Before they leave Ten Forward Barclay stops to make a brilliant move to end a chess game in progress at another table. As they leave Troi remarks that she didn't know he plays chess. "I don't," is Barclay's reply.

Dwight Schultz reprises his role of the misfit Lieutentant from last season. In between, oddly enough, he appeared in the film The Long Walk Home with Whoopi Goldberg. His has become a popular character and it is not hard to imagine that Barclay may be seen again, although he seemed to have left much of his bumbling personality behind by the end of this story. The idea of Barclay as a rival to Riker for Troi's affections is delightful.

20) QPID

27TH APRIL 1991

WRITTEN BY IRA STEVEN BEHR; STORY BY RANDEE RUSSELL AND IRA STEVEN BEHR; DIRECTED BY CLIFF BOLE; MUSIC BY DENNIS MCCARTHY; VISUAL EFFECTS SUPERVISOR DAN CURRY

This season's annual return of Q is rather submerged in a complicated scenario that also features the reappearance of Vash, Captain Picard's love interest from CAPTAIN'S HOLIDAY, and an implausible excuse to involve the crew in a Robin Hood fantasy. The shipboard sequences are actually quite well written as Picard is placed in the unusual situation of having to juggle personal relationships and the dictates of his particular version of the duties of command. The Sherwood Forest excursion is another matter.

Captain Picard is working late in his ready room, pouring over the text of the keynote address he is to deliver to the Federation Archeological Council's annual symposium which the Enterprise is hosting. The ship is in orbit above Tegas 3 and the captain is an avid student of the expeditions to the mysterious ruins found there — but the planet has closed those ruins to outsiders for more than a century so he can only review the history of earlier expeditions and offer his own theories. Counsellor Troi comes to try to get him to relax, assuring him that he has written a brilliant speech, but he is concerned about the many august professionals who will be in his audience now that the council members have beamed aboard.

He finally calls it a night and goes to his quarters, mulling over his notes as he goes. He suddenly notices a strange object sitting on a table — it is a Horga'hn from the planet Risa, where he vacationed last year. Vash, the adventuress he met there, walks out of his bedroom. When he asks how she got into his rooms she replies that she came in through the window. Any further questions are postponed by a passionate kiss.

Over tea in the morning, Picard asks Vash if she is a member of the Archeological Council, but she just smiles. He asks why she came to Tegas and she says it was to see him. Further conversation is interrupted by the door chime, which suddenly causes the captain to look worried. He goes to the door to find a casually-attired Beverly Crusher. The doctor walks in apologising for being late, then notices that Jean-Luc has company and he must stumble through introductions. Beverly tells Vash that she and the captain "often share morning tea together". Vash tells the doctor that "Jean-Luc has told me all about you", and Beverly replies "I am surprised that he didn't mention you". Vash is surprised about that too and Picard becomes more and more nervous as Beverly offers to take Vash on a tour of the ship.

When they get to Ten Forward, Beverly goes to get drinks and Commander Riker immediately walks up to Vash and says "eternity never looked so lovely" ... only to have her tell him what his next line will be. He thinks she must be a Betazoid but she tells an astonished Riker that his captain does a very good imitation of it. Beverly returns to inform Riker that the captain met Vash on Risa and Vash realises that Jean-Luc never mentioned her to Riker either.

At a reception for the Council later she questions Troi and finds that yet another person knows nothing about her, although she thought that the captain would at least confide in the counsellor. Troi says that she must understand that the captain is a very private man, but Vash has become angry and pulls Jean-Luc aside to demand to know why he has never mentioned her to his friends. He tells her that would be inappropriate, that "a captain does not reveal his personal feelings to his crew". She finds that answer unacceptable and storms out. An unhappy Picard goes to his ready room and finds Q sitting at his desk, displaying his usual impudence. But Q is on an unusual mission, at least for him. He wants to do Picard a favour, because he saved his life the last time they met. "I have a debt to repay and it gnaws at me." Picard dismisses the idea and demands that he go away. Q says that he has read Jean-Luc's speech ("dull, plodding, pedantic — much like yourself") and offers to take him to the forbidden ruins for first hand information. Picard refuses to break the law and Q vanishes for the moment.

Picard finally makes his way to Vash's quarters, taking care that he is not observed by passing crewmen. He says he wants to try to explain the situation to her but he stops when he spots a map of the ruins on Tegus. She still insists that he was the most important reason for coming here, but does not deny that she planned to get down to the ruins in search of artefacts she could sell for a handsome price. Picard says he will not allow it and she angrily tells him that she cannot change who she is for him or anyone else. He says he cannot change who he is and leaves. Q has observed this exchange and reappears to torment Picard when he goes to bed, warning him that this human emotion love is a dangerous thing. Vash has found a vulnerability in Picard that has eluded Q for years — "had I known sooner I'd have appeared as a female". Picard tells Q that he does not want his advice *or* his favours, but Q is undeterred.

Picard appears before the symposium the following day, with his bridge crew also present for his speech. He has barely begun when strange things start to happen — a quarterstaff materialises in Riker's hand, Data finds himself dressed in monk's robes, and odd hats appear on the heads of the two women. Picard's dress uniform is replaced by an equally antiquated costume in forest green and the whole group next find themselves standing in the woods with assorted weapons. Picard decides it is supposed to be Earth in about the 12th century and they all quickly reach the further conclusion that he must be Robin Hood. Worf, dressed in garish scarlet, is outraged — "Sir, I must protest. I am not a Merry Man!" The Klingon finds an outlet for his protest when a horseman approaches and draws his sword to attack 'Robin Hood'. Worf immediately joins battle and is wounded as troops rush up to support the rider. Picard orders everyone into the forest for safety and a disgusted Guy of Gisbourne orders his men back to Nottingham.

Dr Crusher is able to bandage Worf's arm. Q suddenly appears on horseback and proclaims that he is now the Sheriff of Nottingham. Picard demands that they be immediately returned to the ship, but Q believes that he must teach Jean-Luc a lesson. "Do nothing and by midday tomorrow your crew will be back on the Enterprise." However, Sir Guy has decreed that Lady Marion's head comes off at noon tomorrow. Picard then knows that Vash is 'Marion' in Q's little fantasy. Q tells him that he can remain safely in the forest or try to rescue a woman he claims not to care for from the heavily guarded castle. Picard retorts that his feelings towards Vash are irrelevant. "I would attempt to save any innocent life, as you well know." Q doubts that Vash could be called "innocent" but wants to know if Picard is equally as willing to risk the lives of his crew and rejects the captain's plea to end this before someone gets hurt. The alien says that is impossible — he has given this little fantasy a life of its own and even he does not know what will happen.

Vash has found herself attired in a flowing gown and saddled with a whining servant at the castle. The servant is certain that a few leeches will make her lady's sudden madness go away. Sir Guy comes to see her and offers her one last chance to marry him. Vash slaps him but changes her tactics when she discovers that he plans to execute her and does not believe her "feigned madness". Vash takes a sudden interest in Sir Guy's proposal.

The Merry Men are not progressing too well in the greenwood. Worf breaks Geordi's mandolin in disgust and Troi manages to shoot an arrow into Data rather than her target. That does not matter because her captain orders Riker and the rest to stay in the forest. He regards this matter as personal between himself and Q, and refuses to risk the others in a dangerous attack on the castle.

Back at the castle, the 'Sheriff' is astonished when Sir Guy and Marion appear to announce that they will be wed. He objects that Marion is in league with Robin Hood but Vash quickly says he bewitched her and her suitor says he supposed as much. Sir Guy is entirely infatuated and Q decides that Vash is "intriguing". All of this has been observed by a cloaked servant, who happens to be Picard. When Marion is returned to her tower room he climbs up to the window with difficulty and confidently tells Vash he has come to rescue her, explaining that an old adversary of his has concocted this whole thing. Vash is glad to see him until she learns that he is alone. "What kind of plan is that?!" she shouts. She tells him to go while she stays here and takes care of herself. Picard is angry that she could believe he would leave her here and slings her over his shoulder to leave. At that moment Sir Guy and his men burst into the room. Picard tells Vash to get behind him, but she takes his sword and turns him over as a wedding gift to Sir Guy.

But Vash then secretly writes a message to Riker pleading with him to come to the captain's rescue. Q barges into her room, fascinated by her ruthlessness, and discovers her ruse. "What marvellous duplicity!" he cries — and then turns her over to Sir Guy to be executed along with Robin Hood. The outlaw couple are brought out for execution in the courtyard, quarrelling every step of the way. Q asks Picard if he sees what brought him to this end — "was she worth it?" But the crew have not obeyed orders. They have gained entrance as monks and Data creates a diversion with an explosion, allowing Picard to attack the executioner. In the ensuing melee, Vash is dragged back to her tower after doing some damage herself, and Picard duels with Sir Guy, "the greatest swordsman in all Nottingham". Picard prevails, observing that *he* is not from Nottingham. He goes to rescue Vash once again and Q appears and says that his debt to the captain is paid if he sees how love has brought out the worst in him. Vash objects that it has brought out the best in him while Picard demands an end to this. Q obliges by returning them to the now empty conference room, but Vash is not there, nor is she anywhere on the ship.

A troubled captain returns to his quarters, only to have Vash materialise there in full safari regalia. She explains that Q had some things he wanted to discuss with her and is pleased that Jean-Luc had been worried. She says that at least the whole experience did prove he does care for her and he assures her that, while he may not show his feelings to his crew, that doesn't mean he has none. He asks where she is off to now and Q appears as her new 'partner'. Picard denounces Q as devious, amoral and not to be trusted ... and then stops as he realises who that reminds him of. Q says they are going to have fun as he can take her places no human has ever seen. Picard asks that he guarantee her safety as payment in full to him.

Too much is loaded into one episode here, and the Sherwood Forest sequence suffers as a consequence. And while Vash is permitted to strike a few good blows when the fighting breaks out, Troi and Crusher are reduced to the inanities of breaking pots over people's heads while the men of the bridge crew are all magically proficient with ancient Earth weapons when they need to be. It is also quite convenient that everyone is familiar with the legend of Robin Hood, even the non-humans. The larcenous Vash is a better-written character in this outing but it seems certain that the good captain will always remain too ethical to be compatible with her lifestyle. And there is always morning tea with the doctor.

MORE TREK NEWS...

THE NEXT GENERATION has again been nominated for several Emmys, all once again on the creative side. These are for Best Art Direction for a Series ('The Best of Both Worlds'), Best Cinematography for a Series ('Family'), Best Sound Mixing for a Drama Series ('The Best of Both Worlds'), Best Sound Editing for a Series ('The Best of Both Worlds'), Best Music Composition for a Series ('Half a Life'), Best Costume Design for a Series ('Devil's Due'), Best Special Visual Effects ('The Best of Both Worlds' Part 1, 'The Best of Both Worlds' Part 2), Best Makeup for a Series ('Brothers', 'Identity Crisis').

RICHARD ARNOLD has revealed that he expects 'The Next Generation' to run a full six seasons on television and that plans are already afoot for a transition to film after that. However, these plans are subject to Paramount approval and there are no guarantees at this time of either a sixth series or films. Much will depend on the reception given 'Star Trek VI' in December and the continued good ratings of 'The Next Generation' in its fifth year. Always anxious to cover all options, Paramount is reported to have already ordered the reshooting of some scenes in 'ST:VI' to make it easier to continue yet again with the original crew, should they want that possibility.

THE 25th ANNIVERSARY 'Star Trek' book from Gene Roddenberry and Susan Sackett has been indefinitely postponed (some even say cancelled) because of a dispute with Leonard Nimoy, who has refused to sign a release for some of the material being used. The book was to appear this summer, then was set for September and now will not be out, if at all, until 1992.

THE UNDISCOVERED COUNTRY

WHILE THE STORYLINE of 'ST:VI' remains a highly guarded subject and the actors themselves are under orders not to reveal any important details about the plot, it is inevitable that copies of the script would begin to circulate and actors will say things now and again. Although the script is supposed to have undergone late extensive rewrites and will be revised in postproduction for months yet, it is clear that the basic outlines of the action have remained much the same as in earlier drafts, and so too have problems that worry some fans.

To a surprising degree, 'ST:VI' appears to be a Kirk, McCoy, Sulu story. Despite all the early talk of romance for Spock, rumours largely fanned by Nicholas Meyer himself from London, the Spock rôle is not really that large or flamboyant. He does have a Vulcan female protegé in the film whom he clearly cares about, but any overt romance would have to have been added on the eve of filming. This character was originally called Saavik, the same name given to the character in Nick Meyer's 'ST:II' script that was played by Kirstie Alley. There was talk of getting her to reprise the rôle despite the contract dispute which she had with Paramount that cost her the opportunity to appear in the rôle in 'ST:III', but she was not willing to do so. Instead of turning to Robin Curtis, who played Saavik in the two films after Alley's salary demands had been rejected, Kim Cattrail was cast in the part and the name has been changed to Valerius (how un-Vulcan).

Spock spends most of the film separated from Kirk and McCoy, waiting for an opportunity to help them. The rest of the regular cast, with the exception of Sulu, are aboard the Enterprise with Spock and have surprisingly little to do. The bulk of the action involves Kirk and McCoy, and Sulu cuts a dashing figure as Captain in his own right now of the giant starship Excelsior. As Sulu becomes aware of the crisis facing his former crewmates, he must choose whether to obey orders or come to the aid of his friends, arriving in the nick of time to save the Enterprise itself from destruction.

The script, as originally set, had all three of the major characters - Kirk, Spock and McCoy - scheduled to retire from Starfleet at the end of the film (surprising given Spock's longer life expectancy). And Shatner had a voice-over at the end in which he said that this is the final cruise of the Enterprise under his command and that the ship will shortly come under the care of a new generation. This is apparently being reconsidered as Paramount gets positive feedback on the film in postproduction and may choose to hedge now on whether there might still be yet another original cast film if 'ST:VI' does extremely well. In any case, the script does leave George Takei in the position of being the one cast member most clearly in a position to carry on with the films if that is desired, or to make a transitional film bridging the two series. He is the youngest member of the original cast and the only one now allowed to command his own ship (which just happens to be bigger and faster than the Enterprise...).

Paramount officially shows 'ST:V' as having lost about $30 million - slightly more than the budget allocated to its successor.

KATHLEEN TOTH

THE MAKING OF A (DOOMED) TELEVISION SERIES

ANTHONY BROWN TAKES A DETAILED LOOK AT THE MAKING OF THE SHORT-LIVED BBC2 SCIENCE-FICTION SERIES 'STAR COPS'...

Given the climate it was born in, the question isn't really why Star Cops died, it's how it ever got started in the first place. TV SF was hardly in fashion in early 1985, and Blake's 7 was, after all, supposedly axed because the visual effects department couldn't cope with both it and Dr Who. Conspiracy theorists might suggest this shows Star Cops was Dr Who's replacement, but that was undoubtedly The Tripods, then still the darling of the drama department.

But Star Cops, perhaps, wasn't regarded as science fiction - the BBC described it as a "futuristic crime thriller" in their internal memos. At the time, creator Chris Boucher was working as script editor on the recently reprieved Bergerac, and it is possible that Star Cops was regarded as a potential successor to that series. Although the eventual series was closer to Softly Softly Task Force, with Commander Nathan Spring only the most prominent of several lead characters, the first two scripts are slanted more towards the "hero and partner" genre, and it would be interesting to know how many of the central characters were envisaged at this time. Despite Pal Kenzy and Colin Devis appearing in the "pilots", her single scene could easily have been a late addition, while only one line suggests that Devis might reappear (1). A series without them would have gone in a very different direction, with Nathan and Theroux developing the "buddy" relationship that their mutual fondness for film quotes suggests in "An Instinct for Murder".

By April 1986 Star Cops had been given the go-ahead, with a further eight episodes commissioned to follow Boucher's pilots. These ten scripts - all that ever appear to have been written - were intended to form the first of three seasons (according to VFX designer Mike Kelt). But by now Star Cops had become a BBC2 series, despite the Daily Mail's claim that it was "dear to Michael Grade's heart". Rumours at the time suggested that Grade wanted a fast-moving Starsky and Hutch in space, and wasn't interested in what Boucher delivered. Whatever the truth, Star Cops' transfer to BBC2 did suggest that its long-term future was already in doubt. In 1986 BBC2 didn't transmit any home-produced drama series, only one-off plays and serials. In fact, on-going episodic drama series (such as Star Cops) are almost unknown on BBC2, and only one, 1990, has ever run for more than one season. Graeme Harper, director of half of Star Cops, thought it a "brave, wonderful idea" that such a series was being done for BBC2, but was less happy with the time-slot. "They put it out at a lousy time. Eight thirty on a Monday night in the middle of summer is not exactly going to attract a big audience. It was a winter night show, and it should have been on Friday, Saturday or Sunday when it would have been wonderful." Nonetheless, ITV felt the series a potential ratings winner, cannily scheduling the mini-series Space to oppose its last half hour.

Production of the first three episodes began around the 6th August 1986 (2), with two more studio blocks following at three-week intervals. The subsequent episodes were recorded individually (3), (aside from a few scenes rescheduled due to production problems) generally over three days in studio TC3, although "Trivial Games and Paranoid Pursuits" (along with with parts of the first three episodes) used the larger TC8. Although these opening episodes were directed by Christopher Baker, the regulars were cast by a collaborative effort, as Graeme Harper explains... "I sat down with Chris Baker and the producer and we bashed around and threw out ideas amongst ourselves. I was very strong that the Devis part was written for Trevor Cooper, and I fought very hard for him. Trevor and I were working on something else and I was offered the script and although there were several characters in it, there was Trevor described exactly! Chris suggested one actor who was much older and thinner, and the problem was that if Nathan Spring and the Devis character were the same age you had certain scenes that had to be rewritten as they didn't work. But with a younger, up-and-coming, bolshy, bull-headed but honest man there was something that Nathan Spring could see in this guy that he could relate to. It wouldn't have worked with an older person. On paper I thought it read, not bland, but a bit stereotyped and didn't really go anywhere, so it needed an actor who could see that Devis was the one person who was destined to be a space policeman, that it was the best thing that could've happened to him, to go into space and live in weightlessness, who could see that and direct the character and make him go somewhere."

Graeme Harper has a point; Devis, the stupid, overweight Londoner could easily have become a comic successor to Journey into Space's Lemmy, and the credibility Trevor Cooper brings to him is a tribute to his talent, particularly as he is frequently left back at base. But, as Trevor Cooper comments, "I think that there was a very good reason for Devis being left on Moonbase. He wasn't a diplomat in any way, so you couldn't really send him to another base to sort things out. The one time he was sent to do something on his own, to Japan, he got stuck in the clink after five minutes."

That Trevor Cooper was willing to accept small roles for the sake of the plot is typical of the enthusiasm that made the characterisation so successful, and the casting of Linda Newton and David Calder (undoubtedly a good omen, given that David Caulder had command of Moonbase 3, while Lee Calder was the director of the spacelab in Kit Pedler and Gerry Davis' orbital whodunit The Dynostar Menace, which the BBC considered producing as a TV movie in 1983) was particularly inspired.

THEROUX
SPRING
KENZ

The absence of their chemistry is probably the reason for the relative weakness of the early episodes, though Christopher Baker's lack-lustre direction must receive some blame. In his defence, it should be remembered that he had to cope with the inevitable teething troubles of such an effects intensive production, and he must have been aware that many potential viewers would judge the series purely on its visuals.

Unfortunately, the special effects of the early episodes are less than impressive. The problem lies not with the model shots, which are excellent throughout the series with a stark realism that is entirely convincing. No, it's the interior of the Space Station Charles De Gaulle that's the trouble, with its wires and CSO haloes, and it is noticable that after the ISPF's transfer to Moonbase in "Conversations with the Dead" the only space stations to appear are the American one, blessed with rotational "gravity", and small research complexes whose cramped confines necessitated the use of close-ups.

It's unfortunate that the weightlessness failures managed to overshadow the rest of the effects, as, particularly in the final episode, they are very effective. Consider, for instance, the breathtaking Martian sunrise in "Little Green Men and Other Martians". Although much of the effects work was done in-house, by Mike Kelt amongst others, the spacesuits were constructed by Richard Gregory's Imagineering workshop. Working on the principal espoused by pundit James Burke at the time of Moonbase 3, the suits were based largely on current designs, with old military radio knobs used as detail. Whether this was the right decision is questionable. Although the Soviet Union has tended to merely up-date existing equipment with new technology (they still use an adaption of the original Sputnik booster rocket to launch Soyuz crews on their flights to the Mir space station, for instance), America redesigns equipment from scratch each time a new spacecraft is required. Pork Barrel politics ensure that every time a contract is awarded, others are reassigned so as to give each State their share of the "pie". As a result it is unlikely that the spacesuits of 2027 will resemble those of 1986, at least externally. In fact, the Star Cops helmets were almost identical to current Shuttle designs, as they were based around one left over from Disney's ill-fated movie Space Camp. As a regular feature of the series they had to be durable, so they were made (as were the back-packs) of fibre glass, with a metalised plastic standing in for the gold anti-glare visors -a feature controversially omitted from the Moonbase 3 suits. The gloves though perhaps took realism too far. In the early days of spaceflight, spacewalks were consistently abandoned as the astronauts exhausted themselves struggling with inflexible suits, and it was not until Gemini 12 that a successful EVA was carried out. Among pilot Buzz Aldrin's preparations for the flight, he developed the habit of carrying a tennis ball in his clenched fist so as to give his fingers the strength necessary to flex his gloves. With the cast unwilling to go to such lengths for verisimilitude, less accurate gloves (available from all good garden centres) were substituted for Imagineering's originals. Another item not used was a miniature spacesuited figure intended for animation in model shots, but whose use would have been too costly in terms of studio time.

With the fourth episode, "Trivial Games and Paranoid Pursuits", the series came into its own. During rehearsals for this episode, which concerned US involvement in al illegal but deniable project, the Iran-Contragate scandal broke, and this development caused Graeme Harper a few anxious moments. For a while it seemed unlikely that the Americans would name a shredding machine, let alone a space station, after Ronald Reagan. The President survived, but a greater threat to the episodes long-term credibility had already occurred. The Challenger disaster, it is now clear, had already doomed the Space Shuttle programme, making it unlikely that there will be any surplus orbiters available to dodgy scrap dealers. In 1986, with the Shuttle expected to return to flight quickly, and space station Freedom just authorised, the world of Star Cops was a credible possibility for 2027. Five years on, it seems unlikely to arrive this side of 2050, as it is now obvious that budgetary restrictions in the seventies produced a Shuttle incapable of performing the role for which it was designed, while a cut-price version of Freedom has only just escaped outright cancellation. Without a massive investment of funds, George Bush's call for a return to the Moon is unlikely to be achieved before 2019.

Having offended the Americans, the ISPF then turned their attentions to the Italians and the Japanese, reducing the chances of overseas sales still further (in fact, the American screening was delayed for several years in the vain hope of a second season). Both episodes include notable examples of the series' use of subliminal video effects, seen reflected in mirrors and visors. Nathan's visit to Rome is established, not by a sledge-hammer insert of St Peter's Square, but by a ghostly reflection of the Coliseum in his hotel window. "In Warm Blood" also includes a sequence, as Nathan and Krivenco view the post mortem slides of Krivenco's former lover, which is very carefully lit so as to allow Jonathan Adams (formerly pathologist Dr Lejeune in Bergerac) to underplay a very emotional scene. Unfortunately, as Graeme Harper noted at the time: "If you were to watch it on a video cassette, all that strange lighting, you'll find all the blues shimmer. When it goes out live it's all perfect, it's beautiful, but a VHS copy of it loses something". Clearly he wasn't thinking in terms of a video release at the time.

John Collee's "A Double Life" is probably the most SF-orientated episode of the series, but perversely it need not have taken place at all, with just one line inserted to explain why the crime took place in the ISPF's jurisdiction. That the majority of the crimes were familiar ones transplanted to orbit has lead some to dub the series "Z Cars in Space", but Trevor Cooper liked this approach. "It rooted in reality. I didn't mind that aspect really, and I thought there were enough inventive ideas to keep it going and keep it quite fresh". The crimes are in fact rather too interesting to be realistic - the most likely offence to occur in space is the murder of an irritating crew-mate, but (luckily for Devis!) this never happens. This was probably wise, as the weakest episodes of Moonbase 3, Star Cop's closest ancestor, are those which are self-consciously "spacey". Not that the stresses of space can't make good drama, as in "View of a Dead Planet", which would have fitted into Star Cops well. It and "Other People's Secrets" are very similar, though the latter is rather less melodramatic. While the Moonbase 3 crew react to the prospect of a slow death from suffocation with displays of hysteria, drunkenness and an attempted rape, Nathan's team stay calm and introspective.

Aside from giving Trevor Cooper a love scene ("I don't get asked to do many. I wonder why?") the point of the episode is to trap Nathan and Kenzy together. Their relationship is one of the most interesting "romances" presented on TV. Although both begin hating each other, there is nothing personal in their animosity (Nathan hates all bent cops - Kenzy all people who sack her) and it is on a professional level that this changes as Spring comes to realise that Kenzy has the making of an excellent detective, while she is impressed by his integrity. Even at the end of the season it's unclear how far their affection goes, and Trevor Cooper for one felt this was handled very well. "There were rumours before we did the last episode that the relationship was going to be taken even further than it actually was, and I'm sort of glad that it wasn't at that stage. It was left sort of hanging in the air - it was a great relationship between those two." It's interesting to wonder how much closer that relationship might have become had the original plan been followed, and both characters had opened up to each other while stuck in the emergency shelter, with Kenzy explaining how a psychiatrist wrecked her sister.

"Other People's Secrets", like "In Warm Blood" before it, was assigned only two days in studio (21-22 January 1987) and had some scenes left over for the next studio session. The next episode shown was to have been Phillip Martin's "Death on the Moon", commissioned eighth but intended for recording last, in week nine (a fortnight after "Little Green Men and Other Martians"). Graeme Harper was looking forward to it: "There was one great story to be done - a masterpiece, a classic, though I suppose it was slightly outrageous. It was about a conglomerate who had the contrast to actually throw bits of moonsoil out into space, project them out into space, to be picked up by travelling workshops 20,000 miles out above the earth. And these cubes of moonsoil were then going to be used to build a huge space station, a big ring. And this is one of the ideas NASA actually have got. They can't take stuff from Earth, so they'll take it from the Moon and use the low gravity, and push these things out by catapult." The ISPF become involved when the body of Han, an employee of the Chinex Company who are partners in the project, is found in one of the launcher tubes. Nathan assigns a Star Cop to each of the five suspects, and finds their tendency to treat the whole affair as an Agatha Christie whodunit frustrating. Pressurised by Krivenko into letting the suspects leave the Moon, Nathan arrests the most likely culprit, only to have him poisoned in custody. Realising that the entire project is a con, Nathan exposes the culprit as they address a world-wide shareholders' meeting via video. Something of the style of the episode can be assessed from the costume designer's admission that she based the costume for the Swiss financier Eugene Huldrych on Batman's adversary, the Penguin. "Unfortunately," Graeme Harper explains, "there was an electricians' dispute just before Christmas which knocked a lot of studios out, and there were other things which had priority, so we had to lose an episode."

But the lose of this episode did lead to some interesting rumours about its content, none of them true. In particular David Theroux's absence from the final episode caused some sinister speculation... "The reason why Theroux didn't appear in the final episode was that Ray had chicken pox. He caught it about a day before we went to record that episode, he actually finished off episode eight when he had chicken pox and if you look very closely you can see great spots all over him. Obviously he was very ill because at that age when you get chicken pox... he couldn't be in the last episode in which he had a major part, so he was sent home and we sat down and rewrote the episode and gave most of his lines to Linda. The whole relationship between Kenzy and the journalist played by Roy Holder was meant to be with Theroux, which gave a completely different slant to it, obviously. But that's why he wasn't there - there were no secret things about him disappearing or being killed off", explained Trevor Cooper. The rewrite was very successful, though if one watched carefully it is noticeable that at one point, towards the end, Kenzy is actually in two places at once.

By the end of the series, Star Cops was in great shape, with Graeme Harper confident that the technical problems had been licked, and looking forward to a second season set, in part, on Mars. Although the series lost some viewers, thanks to a poorly-explained first episode (which was rather better resolved in earlier drafts), it had developed an enthusiastic core of followers, many of them the sort of literary SF fan generally unimpressed by telefantasy. If the initial ratings of around three million were too small to support such an expensive series, one is forced to ask (again) what it was doing on BBC2, where it could not be expected to do any better, in the first place. Had the suggested BBC1 repeat taken place, the series was ready to take off.

But it didn't, and it seems unlikely that the drama department (who claimed to be "unhappy" with the series) ever seriously considered continuing it, whatever plans the production team might have laid. Although it would be nice to think that the success of the video releases (in the top ten at the local Our Price) might bring the ISPF out retirement, the most we can realistically hope for is a couple of cash-in novelisations. At least we'll be spared the spectacle of the BBC auctioning off Box - they've already cannibalised him, and he's now the second incarnation of Red Dwarf's talking toaster!

FOOTNOTES:

1. I am grateful to Chris Boucher, whose letter I received literally as this article went to press - too late to alter the main text - for the following information.

"As I recall, I had intended to introduce regulars over a period of time rather than push them all in at once at the beginning. The first episode was originally a two-parter which I was required to condense into a single episode, because two-part stories were out of favour at the time. Kenzy and Krivenko were both planned characters at the start. The only character which I did not plan and which I had nothing to do with introducing was Anna Shoun."

(with thanks to Anthony Clark and Alan Stevens)

No Laughing Matter

AS TELEFANTASY fans, DWB readers can hardly have a high opinion of Jonathan Powell's tenure as Controller of BBC 1. But however much we might object to him imposing his own dislike of science fiction (sub-standard Spielberg-clone TV movies excepted, of course ...) on the licence payers, the BBC has always allowed a Controller the freedom to use his own judgement. If he's successful elsewhere we can hardly expect the whinings of a special interest group to merit much attention.

But science fiction isn't the only victim of Powell's strategy, which might be loosely described as Plays and Serials for the BAFTAs, Australian Trash for the ratings. The failure of this tactic is demonstrated by the low ratings of Police Rescue, the Australian adventure series which has pushed the final run of Dallas from its traditional Wednesday night slot. Last year Dallas was reaching seven to eight million viewers, and is still watched by four million of them on Sunday afternoon. Police Rescue, in contrast, can manage to attract only five million.

Still, one should judge a man on his strengths, and Jonathan Powell, despite having no track record in the area, has persistently claimed, as far back as his debut 'season' in autumn 1988, to be the Controller for Comedy. Sure enough, his top rating programmes, soaps excluded, are all comedies. It's a pity then that this success, and most of all Powell's contribution to it, is nothing but an illusion.

Powell inherited about a dozen successful sitcoms : Allo Allo, Only Fools and Horses ... Some have gone from strength to strength, controlled by long standing writers and producers with little attention needed from the Controller except perhaps to persuade them that there is the material for another series. Others, Hi De Hi and Sorry included, have met well-deserved ends, while a few have been continued far beyond their natural life span (might I mention Bread?). All this is par for the course, under any controller. But Powell's record where new series are concerned is far less impressive.

Of twenty new sitcoms in the past three years, only two, Birds of a Feather and May to December, can be called real successes, and neither quite seems to have the 'bite' necessary to make them classics. Carry on down the list of the new shows and you reach You Rang M'Lord and Keeping Up Appearances, serviceable if uninspired products of long established sitcom 'factories'. Next come the series which came and went without a trace, worth trying but ultimately unforgettable : Double First and Joint Account. A Touch of Spice made so little impression that even the author claims to have forgotten it — despite meeting his wife while she was starring in the series!

And then you have the disasters — lots of them. Wyatt's Watchdogs and Morris Minor's Marvellous Motors, not to mention Laura and Disorder. Poor Wendy Craig, deluged with letters from sympathetic fans, all telling her to blame the writers for the disaster. Little did they know she wrote it herself ...

Of course failures are inevitable, but Auntie Beeb used to be the undisputed queen of the sitcom. Now, at a time when comedy is supposedly the BBC's priority, ITV are in definite competition, with a handful of classics such as The New Statesman and a string of highly watchable 'second division' series : The Piglet Files, Watching, Shelley (increasingly a latter-day Hancock), Up The Garden Path, Second Thoughts and After Henry. And more importantly, the last three are all BBC Radio series which Powell allowed to slip through his fingers. Once, like To The Manor Born, they would have transferred to BBC1 automatically. Now they're on the other side, along with the cult hit Whose Line Is It Anyway.

After Henry is a case in point. The Radio 4 original is already recognised, along with Radio Active (now transferred to BBC 2 as KYTV), as *the* radio comedy of the eighties. It's gently funny, but it also has bite. Every one of the great sitcoms, from Steptoe and Son to Only Fools and Horses, is based around a tragic personal relationship : Harold's inability to escape his appalling father, the 'waste' of Del-boy's youth, spent bringing up Rodney. Birds of a Feather has the seed of such a situation, in the wives' loss of their husbands to Her Majesty's hospitality, but largely ignores it in favour of a form of crude humour which makes its closest predecessor On The Buses. After Henry inhabits this territory (the widowed Sarah's terror that her mother will 'reclaim' her, and that she'll cling to her own daughter in the same way) and could well have been one of the TV greats, but it was rejected as 'too middle class' in favour of northern clone, No Frills, which wasn't a patch on the original, even in its shortened and lobotomised ITV version. Nowadays, though, one has to wonder whether such a similarity in two series would prevent Powell from commissioning them both, to judge by the astonishing resemblance between Waiting For God and One Foot In The Grave.

So why hasn't anyone noticed this comic failure, particularly as BBC 1 is some 4-6% below its unofficial target in the viewing figures? Well, the Guardian has, but in general Powell has been able to disguise his mistakes with a bandage : repeats — lots of them.

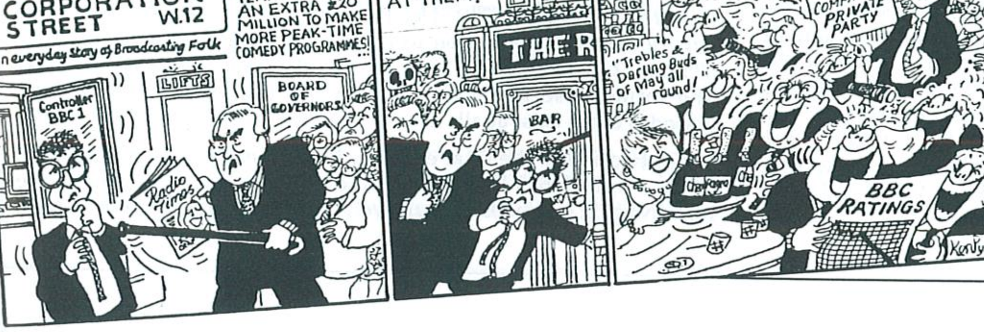
Over the last three years a dozen classic comedies have received extensive repeats on BBC1 : all of Porridge, The Good Life, Fawlty Towers, Blackadder and Open All Hours. Forty-odd episodes of Dad's Army and Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em. Five of the seven series of Only Fools and Horses, and the whole of Butterflies (the latter since March!). It's these series which fill out BBC 1's top twenty and keep the channel's share of the ratings as healthy as it is. Now, there's nothing wrong with seeing these classics again, but at the current rate Powell's next two years as Controller will leave the cupboard bare — BBC 2 have, after all, already re-run Monty Python, Yes Minister and Up Pompeii.

Come the autumn, I'm sure that Radio Times will once again proclaim a 'Bumper Crop of Comedy' on BBC 1, probably over a photo of Russ Abbot (a man desperately in need of a few new ideas). But if you want my guess, the pick of that crop will be the old favourites, probably Citizen Smith, seasons three and four of Only Fools and Horses, and either Are You Being Served? or It 'Ain't 'Alf Hot Mum. *[Interesting to note that Are You Being Served? is being revived — Ed.]* Unfortunately the best hope for comedy on BBC 1 is that Jonathan Powell has been watching the Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy repeats and has realised that he's a superb producer — and a lousy Controller.

ANTHONY BROWN

"Comedy productions will be the main beneficiary of Jonathan Powell's renewed tenure [as Controller of BBC 1]"

— DWB #90, June 1991


CORPORATION STREET W.12
An everyday story of Broadcasting Folk
"POWELL! LAST YEAR WE GAVE YOU AN EXTRA £20 MILLION TO MAKE MORE PEAK-TIME COMEDY PROGRAMMES! ...
LIFTS
Controller BBC 1
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
Radio Times
BUT NOBODY'S LAUGHING AT THEM!"
THE R
BAR
"OH YES THEY ARE"
BAR
ITV COMPANIES PRIVATE PARTY
"Trebles & Darling Buds of May all round!"
BBC RATINGS
KenTyne

Strip (c) Private Eye

BRITISH TELEFANTASY IN THE TELEVISION ARCHIVES

RICHARD MOLESWORTH picks through the remains of the last 40 years of British telefantasy that still exists in the archives

OVER THE YEARS, many wonderful programmes have been made to delight and entertain the tv audience, some to be seen only once, others that resurface again and again. Having dealt with Doctor Who in depth in DWB previously, it seems appropriate that other, not so notorious, programmes are given an archive examination. Although I won't go into the same detail as I did with Doctor Who, if anyone is interested in finding out more about the programmes that are mentioned in this article, I would steer them in the direction of Time Screen magazine, especially issue 7 (although published in 1986 and now out of date, it is due to be reprinted and updated in the next 18 months or so) for their detailed insight into the BBC archives.

To stop this becoming a boring list of programmes, a few short cuts will be made. To begin with, everything broadcast on British tv since 1980 is still in existence in its original form, with the notable exceptions of Doctor Who — *The Awakening* (see DWB #77), which exists in a 50 minute omnibus edition, and the BBC play *The Flipside of Dominic Hide*, which like *The Awakening*, has a large scratch on its 625-line master videotape which makes it unbroadcastable. However, a 1-inch back-up copy has been made that is perfectly transmittable. Secondly, a good episode guide for these series will be necessary, as I'm not going to print lists of them all; the Roger Fulton book *The Encyclopædia of Television Science Fiction* would be ideal.

Please note that this is not a comprehensive list of all telefantasy programmes, just the mainstream ones.

A FOR ANDROMEDA (BBC 1961)

No episodes exist from this series at all, although telerecordings were made. (A telerecording is a film print made by pointing a film camera at a special flat tv screen. It was a way of retaining material when the programme was going out live, or the original videotapes were to be reused.) A clip purporting to be from this programme was shown recently on Channel 4's 1001 Nights of TV, but this was nothing more than a mugged up version of the titles from The Andromeda Breakthrough. However, a few programme inserts do still exist from episodes 1 and 2 on 35mm film.

THE ANDROMEDA BREAKTHROUGH (BBC 1962)

All six episodes still exist in the BBC archives as 35mm black and white telerecordings. A few programme inserts from the first two episodes also exist on 35mm film, although these aren't telerecordings.

ACE OF WANDS (Thames 1970-2)

No episodes from the first two series (each of 13 episodes) exist at Thames, although the programme was sold overseas and copies may still exist. However, all of season three (20 episodes) is still in existence in its original form — two inch colour 625-line videotape. Some of these episodes also survive in other formats, but the original format mentioned here is the superior quality.

ADAM ADAMANT LIVES! (BBC 1966-7)

The first series of this programme has survived very well, considering the BBC's track record for programmes of this period, with only two episodes of the original 16 not currently in residence at the BBC as 35mm b/w telerecordings. These two are *Ticket to Terror* and the final episode of that season, *D for Destruction*. In addition, all prints of the episodes have a separate magnetic soundtrack, which explains the myth stating that some of the episodes have incomplete soundtracks. However, the second series hasn't fared as well, with only two episodes currently in existence. The first of these is *Black Echo*, whilst the second, *Wish You Were Here*, only came to light late in 1988 in the same BBC office in which episodes 1, 4, 5 and 6 of Doctor Who — *The Ice Warriors* were found.

THE AVENGERS (ABC/Weintraub 1961-9)

Until recently the tally was thought to have stood at no Ian Hendry episodes, with everything subsequent existing in its original form (although only 51 of the Honor Blackman episodes existed as negatives, a print was found of the 52nd episode). This means that everything from *Mr Teddy Bear* still exists in its original form. In addition to this, a film print of an Ian Hendry episode, *The Frighteners*, has recently been discovered to add to this tally. At the time of writing it is believed that a second First Season episode also survives, although the title of the episode has yet to be established (*Dragonsfield*?). Obviously, the Hendry/Blackman episodes and the first 26 Diana Rigg episodes exist as 35mm b/w film prints, whilst the last two seasons exist as colour 35mm film prints.

BLAKE'S 7 (BBC 1978-81)

All episodes exist in colour (625-line 2-inch video), plus the 78-minute compilation of *Deliverance* and *Orac* screened over Christmas 1978. (The compilations of Blake's 7 released by BBC Video belong to BBC Enterprises, not BBC Archives. This goes for all compiled BBC Video material, eg. Doctor Who — *Pyramids of Mars*.)

CAPTAIN SCARLET (ATV 1967)

All 32 episodes exist in colour on 35mm film.

CATWEAZLE (LWT 1970-1)

All 26 episodes exist in colour on 16mm film.

THE CHAMPIONS (ATV/ITC 1968-9)

All 30 episodes exist in colour on 35mm film.

THE CHANGES (BBC 1975)

All 10 episodes exist in colour on 16mm film.

CHILDREN OF THE STONES (HTV 1977)

All seven episodes exist in colour on 2-inch 625-line videotape.

CITY BENEATH THE SEA / SECRET BENEATH THE SEA (ABC/Weintraub 1962-3)

These two semi follow-ons from the Pathfinders series are both believed to exist in full as black and white 35mm film prints. It is known for certain that at least two episodes of the former survive.

COUNTERSTRIKE (BBC 1969)

Only the first four episodes of this 10 part black and white series survive as 16mm telerecordings. Episode 6, *Out of Mind*, was postponed on the day it was due to be shown (13th October 1969) and was never screened. Subsequent to this the episode was junked and must rate as the rarest piece of British telefantasy!

DOCTOR WHO (BBC 1963-89)

See previous articles in DWB #77 and #81. It's worth pointing out that since those articles, ABC in Australia have returned all their one-inch 625-line videos of the Jon Pertwee episodes to the BBC, who have placed them in the Archives. This means, firstly, that the BBC now have back-up copies of all the old 2-inch tapes, and secondly, have one-inch conversions of all the 525-line material returned from America and Canada.

DOOMWATCH (BBC 1970-2)

Series one : only six episodes of the first 13 exist in colour on 2-inch 625-line video. These are : *The Plastic Eaters*, *Project Sahara*, *Re-entry Forbidden*, *The Devil's Sweets*, *The Red Sky* and *The Battery People*. In addition to these, two further episodes exist on 525-line 2-inch video : *Tomorrow the Rat* and *Train and De-train*. The former also exists as a conversion to 625-line video. Five episodes don't exist at all.

Series two : only the final episode, *Public Enemy*, exists at the BBC in its original 625-line 2-inch colour videotape. However, the remaining 12 episodes do survive as colour 525-line 2-inch videos, and as black-and-white 16mm telerecordings. In addition, the first episode, *You Killed Toby Wren?* exists as a one-inch 625-line conversion.

Series three : of the 11 transmitted episodes, only two survive on 625-line 2-inch video — *Waiting for a Knighthood* and *Hair Trigger*. It's sad to think that no one will ever see again the episode entitled *The Killer Dolphins* ... Strangely enough, the untransmitted episode of the series (the controversial *Sex and Violence*) also still exists. Maybe it's time for the BBC to dust down this episode and premiere it nearly 20 years after it was made — look what they did with Brimstone and Treacle.

FIREBALL XL5 (ATV/ITC 1962)

All 39 episodes exist in black-and-white on 35mm film.

THE GEORGIAN HOUSE (HTV 1976)

All seven episodes exist in colour on 2-inch 625-line video.

THE INVISIBLE MAN (ITV 1958-9)

As evidenced by the recent late-night regional re-runs, all episodes of this exist, on 35mm black-and-white film, as well as the untransmitted pilot episode.

JOE 90 (ATV/ITC 1968)

All 30 episodes exist in colour on 35mm film.

KING OF THE CASTLE (HTV 1977)

All seven episodes exist in colour on 2-inch 625-line video.

THE LOST PLANET / RETURN TO THE LOST PLANET (BBC 1954-5)

Not only does none of this remain, but it was never recorded, as it went out live!

THE MONSTERS (BBC 1962)

Nothing exists of this four part black-and-white fishy tale.

MOONBASE 3 (BBC 1973)

Only some colour 35mm film footage from episode 3, *Achilles Heel*, exists as a momento of this Barry Letts/Terrance Dicks series.

THE NEW AVENGERS (Avengers Film & TV/ITV 1976-7)

All 26 episodes exist in colour on 35mm film.

1990 (BBC 1977-8)

All 16 episodes of this Edward Woodward drama exist in colour on 625-line 2-inch videotape.

OUT OF THE UNKNOWN (BBC 1965-71)

Series one : all but two episodes from the original 12 exist as black-and-white 16mm telerecordings. The missing two episodes are *The Fox and the Forest* and *Andover and the Android*.

Series two : this fares rather worse than the first series with only *The Machine Stops* (on 35mm) and *Lambda 1* (on 16mm) of the 13 episodes remaining, again as black-and-white telerecordings.

Series three : colour comes to Out of the Unknown, but sadly only a single episode — *The Last Lonely Man* — exists on 625-line 2-inch videotape.

Series four : five episodes remain, again on colour 625-line 2-inch video. These are *To Lay a Ghost*, *This Body is Mine*, *Deathday*, *Welcome Home* and *The Man in my Head*. According to the BBC, two other episodes, *The Chopper* and *The Shattered Eye*, are meant to exist in the archives, but the master tapes of these two were sent abroad in 1976 and haven't been returned since.

THE OWL SERVICE (Granada 1969)

All eight episodes exist in colour on 16mm film.

PATHFINDERS (ABC/Weintraub 1960-1)

No such series, but rather a bracket name for four serials of adventures with recurring characters. The serials are Target Luna (1960), Pathfinders in Space (1960), Pathfinders to Mars (1960-1) and Pathfinders to Venus (1961). Miraculously, all the episodes for the later three series exist as 35mm black-and-white film, although some only in negative form. It is unknown as to whether Target Luna exists at all.

THE PRISONER (Everyman Films/ATV/ITC 1967-8)

All 17 episodes exist in colour on 35mm film, as well as untransmitted extended versions of *Arrival* and *The Chimes of Big Ben*, again in colour.

THE QUATERMASS EXPERIMENT (BBC 1953)

The series was broadcast live, with the first two episodes being telerecorded on 35mm at the time and surviving to this day. The final four episodes were never telerecorded and are lost forever. Two explanations have been suggested for this. The first (and more popular) is that the technicians responsible for doing the telerecordings went on strike at the time of the broadcast, the second is that the quality of the first two attempts were thought so poor that subsequent recordings were cancelled.

QUATERMASS II (BBC 1955)

Again telerecorded from a live transmission, this time proceedings carried on without a hitch and the episodes were repeated three days after their original transmission in what was probably the first ever BBC repeat. These 35mm telerecordings survive to this day.

QUATERMASS AND THE PIT (BBC 1959)

The same as above, telerecorded from a black-and-white live transmission onto 35mm film. The BBC also have repeat compilations of episodes 1-3 and 4-6 from a 1960 two-part showing, again on 35mm.

QUATERMASS (Thames 1979)

All four episodes exist in their original 35mm colour film form. In addition the edited compilation versions of episodes 1/2 and 3/4, and the 'film' version ('The Quatermass Conclusion') survive.

RANDALL AND HOPKIRK (DECEASED) (ATV/ITC 1969)

All 26 episodes exist in colour on 35mm film.

SAPPHIRE AND STEEL (ATV/Central/ITC 1979-82)

It was thought at one time that all of this classic series had been wiped, but fear not; all 34 episodes exist in their original form, even if the majority of them are now acting as door stops in a corridor at ITC!

THE SECRET SERVICE (ATV/ITC 1969)

All 13 episodes exist in colour on 35mm film.

SKY (HTV 1976)

All seven episodes exist in colour on 625-line two-inch video.

SPACE 1999 (ATV/ITC 1975)

All 42 episodes exist in colour on 35mm film.

STAR MAIDENS (STV 1976)

Unfortunately all 13 episodes still exist in colour.

STINGRAY (ATV/ITC 1964)

All 39 episodes exist in colour on 35mm film.

STRANGER FROM SPACE (BBC 1951-2)

All 17 episodes went out live and were never telerecorded.

SUPERCAR (ATV/ITC 1961-2)

All 39 episodes exist in black-and-white on 35mm film.

SURVIVORS (BBC 1975-7)

All 38 episodes from this series survive as colour 625-line two-inch videos.

THUNDERBIRDS (ATV/ITC 1965-6)

All 32 episodes exist in colour on 35mm film.

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TIMESLIP (ATV/ITC 1970-1)

A weird one, this. All 26 episodes exist. Ask ITC and they say it only exists as 16mm black-and-white telerecordings (they even supplied the NFT with b/w prints for their telefantasy weekend in 1986). Victor Pemberton, who currently owns the rights to this series, is only aware of black-and-white prints. So when a colour 625-line clip lasting some two minutes from episode five of *The Time of Ice Box* (episode 11 in the series running order) turned up on a children's tv compilation video (*The Best of 70s Children's TV*; Watershed Home Video) late last year, many people were surprised. It now transpires that a colour 625-line 2-inch video of this episode does in fact exist, but it seems to be the only episode that does. The problem is not helped by the confusion over which episodes were broadcast in which format — rumours abound over black-and-white episodes. These are unfounded as all episodes were transmitted in colour from the two-inch master tapes.

THE TOMORROW PEOPLE (Thames 1973-9)

All 68 episodes of dodgy CSO and wobbly sets exist in their original 625-line two-inch video format.

UFO (ATV/ITC 1970)

All 26 episodes exist in colour on 35mm film.

AND THAT about wraps up the state of play in the telefantasy archives. If one was to draw conclusions from the above, it seems that the BBC have produced marginally more telefantasy than Independent Television, but have a considerably worse track record when it comes to preserving it — as far as ITV are concerned only Ace of Wands, The Avengers and Timeslip have suffered (each in their own way) from the loss of material. However, the BBC have at last got their act together, and are now (possibly) the leaders in the quest for archival perfection, although many would say that they've closed the stable door after the horse has bolted. With the advent of the 'video revolution', many tv companies are starting to wake up to the potential that they have in their archives. In the BBC's case, the added bonus is that before they can release any material the original tapes/films have to be remastered onto one-inch video, effectively preserving the material with back-up copies (a process that doesn't occur when programmes are sold abroad).

Additionally, at the beginning of the article I mentioned that everything transmitted since 1980 still existed. However, at the end of 1981 Southern TV and Westward TV ceased trading, and tracking down their archives is not too easy. The only programmes this affects are Southern's Worzel Gummidge (which we all know still exists) and Noah's Castle. In all probability this survives as well, but I'm only guessing. (ATV also ceased trading at this point, but documentation on this company is more forthcoming.)

Needless to say, there are probably other serials which readers feel ought to be covered, but I had to draw the line somewhere. Similarly, one-off plays such as The Stone Tape and Friends in Space have been ignored. You can't please all of the people all of the time.

Although a lot of material is still in existence, if anyone has any information on the missing material mentioned above, please contact DWB at the editorial address, as it may be possible to follow up any leads.

WHEN TWO CULTURES COLLIDE

In anticipation of a new summer hit to rival *Star Trekkin'* (1988), *Doctor in the Tardis* (1989) and *Thunderbirds Are Go* (1990), PAUL KIRKLEY assesses one aspect of telefantasy which has successfully crossed over into the mainstream

AS INCIDENTAL musicians have been keen to enunciate for many years now, music plays an essential role in determining the eventual success of the finished product. Doctor Who, they tell, for example, owes much to the often atmospheric scores that lie low and brooding to compliment tension and suspense, and pulse dramatically to punctuate the action.

But the elements in this successful fusion of formats can be easily transposed; music, too, owes much to science-fiction and fantasy.

The ways in which these two genres overlap to make, at times, compatible and, at others, disastrous bedfellows have been numerous and varied, ranging from vinyl products directly related to televisual and cinematic projects, through sincere artistic endeavours, to commercial and cynical novelty records such as the abhorrent *Star Trekkin'*.

Film soundtracks are an established by-product of any commercial release, and as long ago as 1969 the classical soundtrack to Stanley Kubrick's 2001 — A Space Odyssey was demonstrative of a film's enhancement through music, repaying the industry with a Number Three album.

Film scores have continued to promote orchestral scores to new audiences, but the 80s have also witnessed a dramatic surge in the use of vocal soundtracks to compliment a film's visuals. An early example can be seen in the soundtrack to the 1981 interpretation of Flash Gordon for which Queen (who would continue writing for the genre with Highlander) provided a number of different musical styles. 1989's blockbuster Batman would, if His Purpleness had had his way, have been entirely provided for, musically, by Prince. As it was, Danny Elfman was commissioned to provide his epic score, and Prince's contributions were reduced to a few brief snatches overheard on stereo systems within the film. This didn't stop him expanding the theme to produce a smash hit 'soundtrack' album to partner Elfman's less successful release.

Prince's desire to be a part of the Batman project seems not, however, to be indicative of artistic attitudes towards fantasy-related projects. The whole genre would appear to hold a particular novel quirkiness that artists wishing to retain integrity shy away from. Thus Justin Hayward turns his theme to Star Cops into a straightforward love song by ambiguously picking up on Nathan Spring's separation from his lover. Cyndi Lauper went a step further with her main title song to Spielberg's The Goonies by writing a totally divorced song called *Good Enough* and retitling the single *The Goonies R Good Enough*!

It is unsurprising, however, that alarm bells begin to sound whenever such keywords as 'science-fiction' and 'fantasy' arise, because a look through a depressingly long back catalogue of single releases shows a merciless plundering of established sci-fi trademarks for 're-investment' in seriously questionable novelty projects.

Sixties Dalekmania was responsible for the horrendously classic *I'm Going to Spend My Christmas* with a Dalek and a whole host of hilarious dirges by such Who celebs as Frazer Hines and Roberta Tovey. Jon Pertwee's *Who is the Doctor* of a few years later is effective for what it is, but can never be viewed as anything more than an attempt to cash in on the contemporary popularity of the programme.

The 80s have been notable for The Firm's passionately hateful Star Trekkin' and the opportunities opened up by sampling and other technological advancements. This has managed to produce a number of discs that, whilst ultimately of little value, are actually quite respectable amongst their contemporary 'dance' counterparts. The Timelords' Doctor in the Tardis is undoubtedly well-produced with a seriously captivating number of beats-per-minutes, and Ben Liebrand's recent remix of Jeff Wayne's *Eve of the War* was an admirably listenable interpretation that also managed to convey some of the mood of the *War of the Worlds* album — in just minutes. A look at the recent charts assures us that the tradition is far from dead. Over the last year in music, fashion and style, the kitsch of the 60s and 70s has been revived for a new generation. Cult television from that era has been revitalised accordingly: Magic Roundabout t-shirts; Prisoner and Avengers graphic novels; the complete Blake's 7 on video; even an edition of The James Whale Radio Show dedicated to cult television.

This has been reflected on a more popular level in music. The music scene is the yardstick of mass culture and in the 90s that means a place for cult fantasy tv. Witness recent successes such as *Thunderbirds Are Go*, Blackman and Macnee's *Kinky Boots*, and the *Power Themes* album crammed with dance mixes of the ITC series of the 60s. The image to accompany the movement is best portrayed by upcoming superstar Betty Boo, whose disco tack can be found accompanied by promotional videos in, firstly, a Thunderbirds-type spacecraft and then, for a later release, the kinky boots and leather-clad high kicks of The Avengers, with Betty doing-the-do with M-appeal!

For the first time ever it is actually quite fashionable to be a cult tv fan, providing you don't take it seriously. What might be over-preciously hoarded by the afficionado is seen, quite rightly, as absurdly nonsensical fun by the raving masses.

The concept is, however, far from original. An earlier example of the milking of sci-fi tack was the immediate post-Star Wars cash-in smash *I Lost My Heart to a Starship Trooper* by Sarah Brightman & Hot Gossip. Despite its lack of integrity and its blatant use of Darth Vader, this does at least stand as a composition in its own right, not *totally* reliant on an established sci-fi success upon whose back it can ride.

Musical attempts in their own right — completely divorced from the film and television industry, yet incorporating science-fiction and fantasy elements within them, or as their basis — are harder to define. David Bowie confused a somewhat hypocritically naïve generation into believing that *Space Oddity* was something of a sci-fi ditty — and we all know what he was really talking about! Bowie wrapped his crypticisms up in even more space age package, as he presented the mythology and visuals of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders From Mars.

Doctor Who Sound Effects
The New Avengers
The Avengers
The Laurie Johnson Orchestra
Four Feather Falls
Stingray
Who is the Doctor
Purple
Dr. Who Mankind
Motor Records
Dr. Who
Batman Theme
The Main Theme From Thunderbirds
Decca
F.11837
Dr. Who
Original Soundtrack from the B.B.C.-TV Series
the Prisoner
Music Collector
Captain Scarlet The Mysterons Theme

More innocent flirtations with the genre were notable during the 70s with such attempts as Elton John's 1972 Rocket Man and The Carpenters ludicrously uncharacteristic *Calling Occupants of Interplanetary Craft (the recognised anthem of World Contact Day)*!

These more blatantly sci-fi influences were offset by an early 70s preoccupation with more traditionally fantastic elements. The progressive rock movement seemed to be made up of chunky-knit wearing sixth form poets with a passion for a Tolkien-like world of wizards, goblins and dragons. This more classical approach to fantasy can probably be explained by the pre-George Lucas slump in anything even remotely resembling a space or hardware science-fiction film (one almost wishes one could return to such a situation where Schwarzenegger and Robocop would be rightfully laughed off the producer's desk). Like the Spiders From Mars, the visual element was strong amongst the purveyors of such prog rock, and Peter Gabriel could often be seen fronting Genesis in all manner of bizarre and surreal creature costumes.

Punk came along to smash all this, yet this itself produced a handful of reactionary bands determined to resurrect the movement, with Tolkien's 'The Silmarillion' giving name to the most successful, Marillion, whose early stage shows presented Gabriel-esque antics, such as the enactment of the title creature from the band's B-side *Grendel* (a ridiculously intricated but melodic 17-minute reinterpretation of the tenth century poem Beowulf!). Suffice to say those involved are somewhat embarrassed about it now!

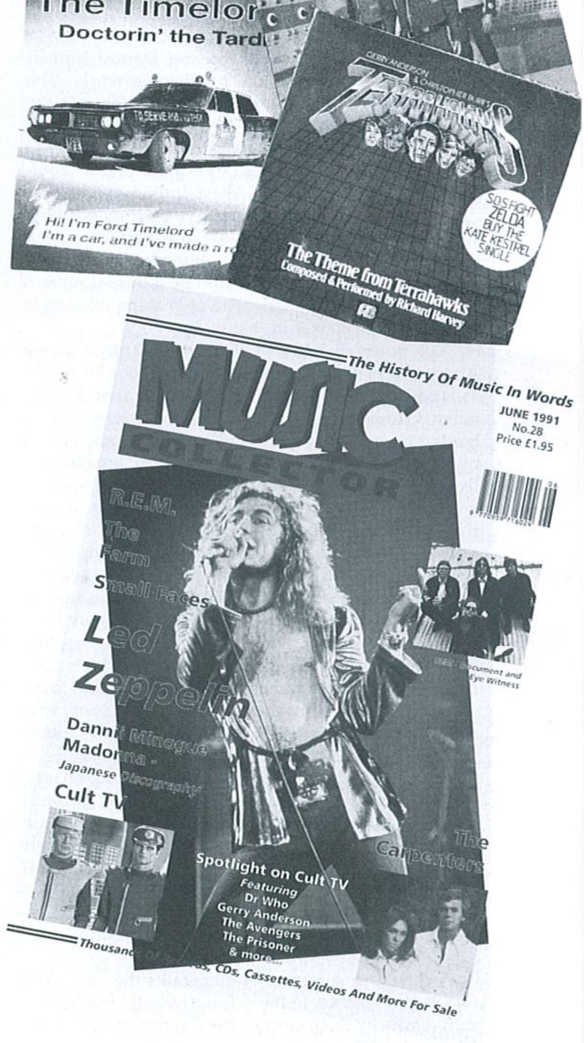
More blatantly, heavy metal outfits have also presented stage shows worthy of note, in particular Iron Maiden and their notorious lobotomised mascot creature, Eddie. (Maiden are also one of the bands that were unafraid to directly link themselves to a fantasy television series, producing two songs based on The Prisoner, and editing together a short compilation of extracts from the series for inclusion on their live video release, 'Maiden England'.)

Then there are the headline-making live slice-and-dice visuals of Alice Cooper. Even Cooper, however, pales in comparison with current shockers GWAR, selling themselves as "space warriors created by a Master, who had them banished to Earth where they cause no end of trouble". They are garbed in an array of hideous costumes that would, according to the NME, "keep Doctor Who in well attired enemies for at least five series". Exploding brains and decapitations seem to constitute the tamer side of GWAR's stage act, all played out to an unceasing onslaught of thrash metal. Of course, in the 80s and 90s there are far more channels available than just the live show for musicians to visually interpret their music. The promo video is as instant a consideration as the song itself, and the most obviously citeable example of how the fantastic has been utilised in this field is Michael Jackson's *Thriller*, the most expensive video ever made. Jackson later developed his interest in visual fantasy and science-fiction into the 'feature film' release Moonwalker. Other examples of videos milking the sci-fi genre have been ZZ Top's *Legs* (although the song itself made no such foray into the space-age images of the video) and Kate Bush's *Cloudbusting*, in which (hey hey) Donald Sutherland plays an inventor who develops a way of controlling cloudbursts. (Again, the song itself was about something completely different, in this case sexologist Wilhelm Reich's relationship with his son, which was obscurely alluded to in the video.)

The fusion of music and fantasy is always inevitable. Both are open channels for unrestricted expression of passion and imagination. On a less obviously comparable level, the guitar solo and the flight of the TARDIS are both, in effect, flights of fantasy. One only has to look at the major literary science-fiction movement of the 80s — 'cyberpunk' — to appreciate the genre's close relationship with music.

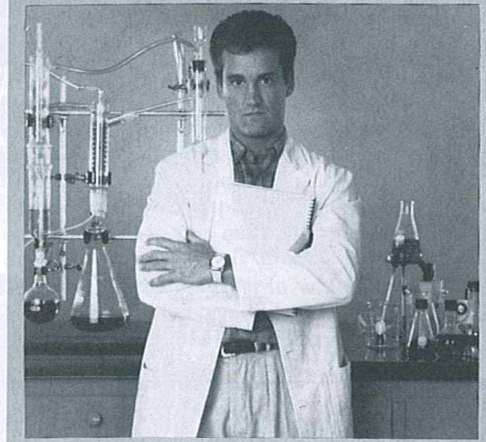
Doctor Who is a particularly topical example of the two artistic areas working together. Recent freelance musicians such as Keff McCulloch, Mark Ayres and Dominic Glynn serve the programme by giving it musical life (or not, in the case of the former!), and the programme serves them by offering a market for such releases as Metro's *Variations on a Theme* or the BBC's 25th anniversary album of Well Def Keff's up-tempo offerings.

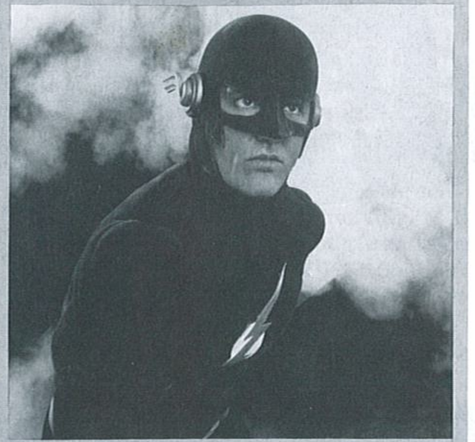
And music and television are destined to compliment each other even more, with the growth of the promotional video offering a whole universe of visual opportunities. Whilst the power and emotion of traditional instrumentation and presentation should never be lost, I'm sure that the future of at least *some* music is in the stars.



THE JUNE ISSUE of 'Music Collector' contained what is probably the most detailed and definitive guide to telefantasy-related records ever assembled together in one place. For details on obtaining a copy, send a SAE to: Music Collector Enterprises Ltd., 6 Chapel Street, Cambridge CB4 1DY.

FLASH IN THE PAN?





TOM BARON previews the antics of the latest US 40s DC Comics superhero to make the transition to the small screen ...

YES FRIENDS, I saw two, count 'em, two episodes of Flash and lived. It was on CBS, and it sucks.

I'd heard about it a few months before, how serious the show would be, how state of the art effects and innovative designers would help create an action-adventure, new and exciting. Er ... anyone think about the scripts?

Okay, it starts with a rousing Danny Elfman score, highly reminiscent of his Batman work. The titles flas... er ... pass before our eyes. There's the hero (John Wesley Shipp), a nice looking young lady (Amanda Pays), a middle-aged man with "grouchy-butloveableboss" written all over him, and a "coolhelpfuldudeandhero'spal" West Indian gent. This last is, perhaps, the most offensive casting, with yet another Black actor hired for the appearance of racial equality, and then given bugger all to do in a story except make the coffee and be a dum-dum so's his White pal looks good. The only thing missing is that they didn't meet in 'Nam.

The story unfolds. Our hero's name is Barry Allen. Barry lives in Central City, where he works as a police scientist. Not only does he attend every major crime-scene, he solves nearly every case (a boy's got to sleep, don't he?). Then, one fateful night, Bazza's working late, a storm breaks and lightning strikes the lab, hurling Baz into a shelf of chemicals. Bazza is lightly sautéed. But what's this? He's not fried. Barry has somehow escaped unharmed. BUT ... now his metabolism is working at a rate far beyond that of you or I. The upshot of which is, he can move extremely fast (all you can see is a blur) and he has to eat a lot. This is figured out for him by the lovely and clever Tina, who we first saw in the titles. She works at S.T.A.R. labs. She doesn't make coffee and she's no dum-dum, but that's the only improvement. She remains a cipher, who gets to say stuff like, "I'm taking that job in California, Barry," and, "Be careful, Barry."

Despite bland and insulting supporting characters, Barry decides to use his power for the forces of good. To this end he dons a red skin-tight costume of the sort which only works in comics — I mean, little yellow wings sticking out either side of his head? Get serious, please!

And the show *tries* to be serious. It *does* use interesting plots — it just uses them very badly.

Take these two episodes:

In the first, a mystery killer stalks the city. And one victim appears to be ... grouchybutloveable himself! Grouchy is, of course, the Captain of Police. So he has loadsa enemies, any of whom would want him dead. Fortunately Barry can get his pal-and-token-black sidekick to do all the boring file-work (which he could do far quicker himself) while Flash turns on the special effects and has a tough time with Tina who is ... yup, "taking that job in California, Barry." Will Barry have to tell Tina that he loves her? Will Flash find the killer? What about the Captain? He can't die, because a new character would have to be created. So they do the next best thing and reach for COP-SHOW CLICHÉ #6. We meet the girlfriend who can safely be offed by the baddie and no nasty continuity problems. Of course, herdeath has zero impact, because she's been on screen for less than five minutes. Grouchy goes on a hunt for the killer, who uses bow and arrow, spear, and electric stunner, the latter stopping Flash with no problems. In the final confrontation scene this weapon is not used, showing the killer to be *very stupid*. It turns out that Captain Grouchy is the man who put away a savage, fanatical survivalist a few years back. The killer is his daughter.

In the last three minutes of the show, Barry tells Tina he'll miss her and (surprise!) she decides to stay. Having made all the coffee, Barry's pal rolls up and seems to have sussed our hero's secret. Could this be an attempt at character development? Naa. Moving jolly, jolly fast, Barry appears to be standing by his pal *and* running past as Flash *at the same time*! And his pal is too thick to realise that anyone who can move like Flash could easily be capable of such a stunt.

The next episode opens and, as usually happens, no one mentions the traumatic events of last time. The Captain's girl might never have existed, he's still the same. Our hero's pal is still unobservant, but Tina no longer pines for the West Coast.

No, this week she's gone off Barry and has met ... an old flame (gasp). Luckily this chap's a badd'un who is killing tramps ("They are wasted lives") while conducting gene-mutating experiments on them. Barry suspects something is amiss but Tina won't listen to him, because ... *he's only being jealous*! See? And now she never wants to see him again. Corny as it sounds, I was quite hopeful that this might become a meaty two-parter, Barry fighting for Tina's love, and against a super-strong adversary (old flame has taken his own gene serum) whilst intercutting a lesson on the morality of experimentation.

Fat chance.

Having injected himself, the baddie turns into a very cheap version of the Hulk, goes on a small-budget rampage, and is easily overcome by Flash, armed only with a ... well, a piece of wire fence, actually. But, because this is a *serious* story, the titles fade up slowly on black, echoing dear old Hill Street Blues. Which, of course, it is a thousand miles away from being.

Now, I know The Flash is only a load of old hooey, but it could have been *good* hooey. It still may be. But it won't while programme makers insist on fantasy shows with trite scripts and superficial characterisation. Imagine a show about a superhero with the same originality, depth and attention to detail (not to mention great acting) as Hill Street. Ahh yes, this would be sweet indeed.

TAKE NOTE, BEEB VID!

Is BBC Video's selection policy for their Doctor Who range selective enough? TIM MUNRO argues that the plethora of overtly commercial releases now available may have damaged the subsequent potential sales of the genuine Doctor Who gems ...

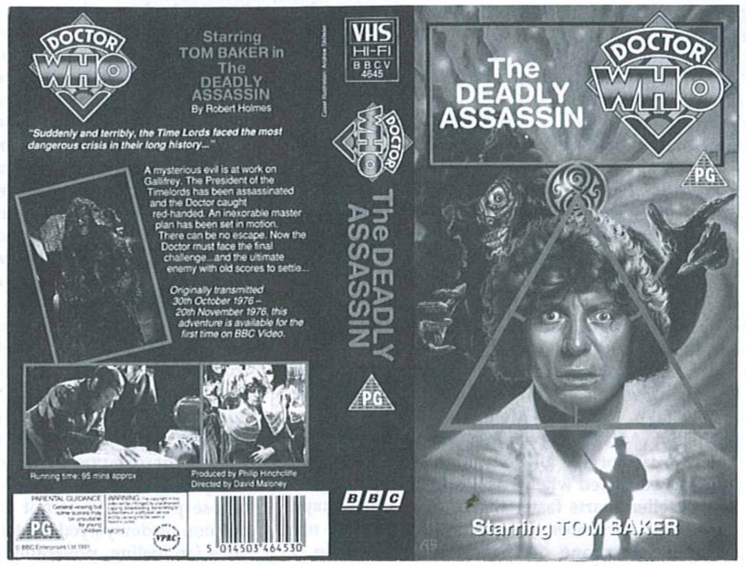
PICTURE THIS. It is the far future. Time travel has at last become a reality. One night, just for a laugh, a posse of drunken Doctor Who fans purloin a time machine and nip back to 1976 where they kidnap a fellow fan from the embryonic days of fandom. Catapulting this hapless individual fifteen years forward from his own era, they deposit him in the Video department of WH Smiths and have a good giggle watching him gawp, weep and generally proclaim himself to have found the Kingdom of Heaven as soon as he sees the Doctor Who range.

To that fan from the 70s, the domestic video recorder would be a rich man's gimmick recently featured on Tomorrow's World. Doctor Who's past would still be a thing of mere fading memory or the occasional rapturously received clip on Blue Peter or Nationwide. Access to that past at the flick of a switch would seem an impossible dream. And this fan, to whom a 1991 video retailer would represent Paradise on Earth, would surely think one rather churlish if one complained about the selection of Doctor Who stories currently available. Even a fan from 1983, excitedly putting himself through a barely watchable ninety-third generation copy of *The Chase*, whilst scraping together thirty quid for an edited but pristine *Revenge of the Cybermen*, might think that such a complainant did not know when he was well off. And glancing up at my own shelves — at the hacked together *Time Warrior*, *Seeds of Death*, *Day of the Daleks* ... and turning to more recent fare such as the complete, unmolested *War Games* or *City of Death* — I suppose my hypothetical fans might have a point. The Doctor Who videos situation is a helluva lot better than it was. Nonetheless, there are still grounds for criticism if not outright complaint; for in one respect — the criterion by which stories are selected for release — the Doctor Who range remains deeply flawed.

Well, I say criterion, but the selection available, even now, is so haphazard that I sometimes wonder if BBC Video employ any selection process at all. Perhaps they are running a bizarre lucky dip, in which the first story plucked off the archive shelves by a blindfolded executive is the one that gets released? Certainly, with the exception of the Troughton era, where BBC Video — having belatedly discovered that there *was* a market for black and white material — quickly released everything available (which isn't much), perusal of the available selection from each Doctor reveals some extremely peculiar priorities indeed.

Take the Pertwee tapes. *Spearhead from Space*, *Day of the Daleks*, *The Time Warrior*, *Death to the Daleks* and *Planet of the Spiders*. Hardly the cream of the Pertwee years. There are many far superior tales which should've had prior claim for release and yet are not even vague possibilities on the horizon of the proposed 1992 schedule — and one must certainly wonder why BBC Video chose to kick off its Pertwee releases with two Daleks stories when these are almost universally regarded as shabby disappointments — and Pertwee's own opinion of *Day of the Daleks*, his video premiere, is unprintable.

BBC Video would tell you that the preponderance of Dalek releases is dictated by commercial considerations. Apparently Joe Public would not buy, say, *Inferno* or *The Curse of Peladon*, but *would* snap up a tape with the magic word 'Daleks' on its spine. Similar considerations prompted the bizarre choice of *Revenge of the Cybermen* as the first ever Doctor Who home video back in 1983, and the subsequent period of releases drawn almost exclusively from Tom Baker's years — Baker being, we're told, the most popular and marketable Doctor, and 'Cybermen' a name that sells tapes.


DOCTOR WHO
Starring
TOM BAKER in
The
DEADLY
ASSASSIN
By Robert Holmes
"Suddenly and terribly, the Time Lords faced the most dangerous crisis in their long history..."
A mysterious evil is at work on Gallifrey. The President of the Timelords has been assassinated and the Doctor caught red-handed. An inexorable master plan has been set in motion. There can be no escape. Now the Doctor must face the final challenge...and the ultimate enemy with old scores to settle...
Originally transmitted 30th October 1976 – 20th November 1976, this adventure is available for the first time on BBC Video.
Running time: 95 mins approx
Produced by Philip Hinchcliffe
Directed by David Maloney
PARENTAL GUIDANCE
PG
VHS
HI-FI
BBCV 4645
The DEADLY ASSASSIN
BBC
5 014503 464530
The DEADLY ASSASSIN
Starring TOM BAKER

Right: The cover for 'The Deadly Assassin', released by BBC Video on October 4th...

Unfortunately, however much sense this might make in the short term (ie. the BBC sells vast piles of *Day of the Daleks*), it reveals a lamentable lack of long-term marketing strategy regarding Doctor Who in its entirety. It seems BBC Video are only interested in selling each tape as it comes along. Very little thought appears to have been given to the purchaser's reaction once he watches what he has bought — yet surely this is crucial to the continued success of the Doctor Who range and the maintenance and expansion of its market? It's undoubtedly very nice if Joe Public buys even one Doctor Who tape. But ideally he should enjoy that tape so much that he buys the next one too, and the next one ... and so on.

Somehow I doubt this is happening. In fact one can picture the scene. Imagine a 23 year-old. He hasn't watched Doctor Who for years, because it's rubbish now, but he has fond memories of when it was the fantastic, gripping show he and all his mates watched every Saturday. He remembers Pertwee's Doctor ... the swirling cloak, the Venusian Karate ... Bessie, the Brig and UNIT ... Daleks, Ogrons ... terrifying aliens, thrilling battles ... and such is the nature of retrospection that these childhood memories are vastly exaggerated. But one day he sees a Doctor Who video in Smiths. In a flood of dewy-eyed nostalgia he buys it, intent on reliving his lost childhood. He gets it home ... puts it one. And he sees ... oh God ... *Day of the Daleks*.

Of course he's disappointed. He feels exactly as I did recently when I day some episodes of The Tomorrow People and had my fondly-held illusions shattered. Who could blame him if he never buys a Doctor Who tape again? More so if he were a 30 year-old who'd had the misfortune to cough up twenty quid for that infamous cure for insomnia, *The Dalek Invasion of Earth*.

This disillusionment is a problem with most big-name Who monsters. I believe it was Graham Williams who said that the Daleks are far more powerful in nostalgic memory that in the 'flesh', and he was absolutely right. They work best when you're seven years old. Going back to them as an adult, expecting to recapture the thrill they gave your younger self, inevitably dooms you to disappointment. The anticipation of them is far more fun than when they actually appear — which, Williams noted, is why viewing figures soar for episode one of any new Dalek story, and then drop off.

Still, it should be possible to give Joe Public *something* from his "golden age of Who" that isn't such a let-down, and here we come to the nostalgia factor, a factor of which, for a company operating in the nostalgia market, BBC Video seem strangely unaware, and into which — with the exception of the release of *The Daleks* — they have only recently tapped (albeit apparently by accident).

On this front, I confess myself astounded that, having done sufficient research to realise that the Daleks are the most famous monsters and Tom Baker the most popular Doctor, BBC Video have not gone one step further and discovered which particular stories the public remember. It isn't as if it would require extensive market research. They need only talk to your average fan who would explain that certain stories, especially from the Pertwee and Baker eras when the show was at its peak of popularity, have lodged irrevocably in the minds of whichever generation happened to see them. For instance, who among us has not had the experience of talking to a non-fan in their twenties whose eyes mist over at the mention of Doctor Who and who proceeds to deliver the familiar litany, "I remember the one with the maggots ... and the one with the spiders ... and the one with the things that came out of the sea." I am convinced that such people would buy these stories if they were available. I also believe that these particular stories would not disappoint their purchasers. Oh they might laugh at some of the special effects, especially the CSO, but it would be affectionate laughter, part of the fun, and they would still find, say, *The Green Death* to be rock solid, enjoyable stuff that left them well-disposed to picking up another Who tape the next time they had some cash to spare.

Of course, "the one with the spiders" is now available, and the fact that it appears to have performed spectacularly well for a grossly over-priced two-tape release would seem to prove my point. Certainly I cannot recall any other two tape set that has remained in the bestsellers charts for so long, nor one which has so consistently out-performed a simultaneous one-tape release. However, I can't help thinking that the decision to release *Spiders* was not so much prompted by the thought that it was a story lodged in the national memory as by the fact that it was a regeneration story. After all, despite *Spiders'* phenomenal success, the releases of its natural bed-fellows, *The Green Death* and *The Sea Devils*, are still nowhere in prospect. And if BBC Video *are* playing to the non-fan nostalgia market, why did they botch up the simultaneous release of *City of Death*?

City is every bit as well and fondly remembered as *Spiders*, albeit by a later generation. To the millions who saw it, it is "the one they did in Paris; the Mona Lisa one". It should have sold as well as *Spiders*. It appears not to have done. Why? Well, I honestly believe people don't realise which story *City of Death* is! There's no mistaking *Planet of the Spiders* — with a title like that it could hardly be anything else and the huge spider plastered across the cover allays any doubt. But *City of Death*? No non-fan remembers *titles*! They need to be told that this is the story they remember, and Skilleter's hideous cover just doesn't do it. It lacks all the elements which characterise the story in the national memory. The effect on sales is roughly what you'd get if you released *The Green Death* with a cover devoid of maggots or giant fly!

The potential for tapping non-fans' rosy memories of the series has also been undercut by BBC Video's policy, up to now, of not releasing 525-line material (with the exception of *Death to the Daleks* part 1, although even that occured "by accident", since by the time they'd discovered that the episode did not exist in 625-line format, it was too late to cancel the release). The effect of this policy on the Pertwee tapes has been devastating. Aside from preventing the release of sure-fire bestsellers like *The Sea Devils*, and leading to the bizarre situation in which Delgado's definitive Master has yet to grace a Pertwee video, it compels BBC Video to select mainly from the latter Pertwee seasons, and particularly Season 11 — a season grossly inferior to its predecessors and therefore more likely to disappoint its purchasers. Meanwhile the underrated Season 7, whose sheer quality is guarantied to shock rigid those coming to it for the first time, sits gathering dust.

The obvious solution to many of the problems I've outlined is to consult the fans, whom one would expect to have the best grasp of which stories are the jewels in Who's crown, and which can be safely left to moulder a few years more. Unfortunately even this approach is fraught with difficulties, as has been demonstrated in recent years as the BBC made an admirable effort to consider 'fan opinion' by taking various series polls into account when planning their schedules.

One aspect of this problem is fan hype. It is a fact that we do tend to exaggerate the worth of our classics beyond all proportion, whilst all too readily sweeping lesser stories into the dustbin. With regard to the classics, this is especially true of stories we saw as children, and our rose-tinted memories inevitably affect the way we vote in surveys. I am aware, for instance, that my own Top Ten consists almost entirely of Hinchcliffe stories, simply because those are the ones that gripped my imagination at the impressionable age of seven and turned me into a fan. No matter how I try, I cannot help but be swayed by that when I vote. Yet I know younger fans who consider my beloved classics to be hugely overrated, and one friend in particular who, coming fresh to *Talons of Weng Chiang*, found it extremely disappointing. At first I was outraged. But then I thought about it, and realised : "Of course he's disappointed. He's listened to the hype, read the rave reviews. He's gone into *Talons* with expectations so massive, *no* story could live up to them." So now I just smile, and say, "You had to be there, at the time." In many ways the most satisfying stories are those we go into without great expectations — witness the number of fans gobsmacked when they finally catch up with a neglected gem like *The Ribos Operation* — or the stories which are reputed to stink (since few stories are as bad as fandom paints them at the time of transmission).

Whilst the polls are undoubtedly a good guide to fan opinion, then, they are not such a reliable indicator of the real worth of individual stories in relation to each other. This is particularly true of the Hartnell material, where a combination of reliance on fan opinion and commercial planning has led BBC Video into some spectacularly ill-advised releases.

The trouble here is, of course, the missing episodes. Survey results for Pertwee onwards may be distorted by nostalgia, but since all these episodes exist at least there are substantial numbers of young fans who have come to them more recently and are therefore voting more objectively, thus providing some corrective influence on the poll. It is perfectly possible for a 12 year-old to have seen all Tom Baker's stories and therefore to vote on that era, just as I vote on Pertwee even though I missed many of his stories first time out. With Hartnell, because so much is missing, the verdict on what is good and what is dross is left entirely to the dwindling band of fans who actually lived through that era.

Now ... let me state immediately that this is not a criticism of the DWB poll. The system which excludes people from voting on an era they have not seen in its entirety seems to me to be the only fair way of conducting such an exercise. Personally I'd love to give *The Aztecs* a leg-up the league, but it >

wouldn't be right — for all I know *The Massacre* might be better. Open the poll to all and 'received opinion' would run riot, with hordes of DWASies who've never seen *The Gunfighters* voting it All-Time Clanger just because DWM keeps telling them it is. Worse, *The Chase* would shoot up the chart simply because the ruddy Daleks are in it! However, if the exclusion rule is fair, we should also be aware that it too produces distorted results, for reasons very astutely pointed out by Keith Dando in his defence of *The Gunfighters* for DWB 89.

As I've said, our votes tend to be influenced by childhood memories. This is as true of Hartnell fans as anybody else. Unfortunately, children are not exactly noted for their critical sensibilities. I myself cringe to remember that at seven years old my favourite Season 12 story was *Revenge of the Cybermen*. Kids are superficially-minded beasts. They want action, adventure, monsters and ray-guns. The subtleties of characterisation, of plot, of quality writing and fine acting are wasted on them. They are "boring". Unsurprising then that a child of the Hartnell years remembers being thrilled and terrified by *The Daleks* and bored to death by *The Aztecs* or *The Crusade*. Unfortunately, these memories produce a regrettable effect when reflected in a fan poll twenty-eight years later. The action/effects-based SF stories soar up the chart. The talk/plot/character-based historicals languish at the bottom, with the army of admirers who've discovered them on pirate video unable to save them.

So ... the Hartnell classics : *The Daleks, The Keys of Marinus, The Dalek Invasion of Earth, The Web Planet, The Chase* (do me a favour). Along comes BBC Video and peruses the poll. "Ah ... the best Hartnell stories," they muse. Then their eyes light up at the magic, oh-so-commerical word "Daleks" and immediately they rush off, like a man who knows where *Tomb of the Cybermen* is buried, to release these classics.

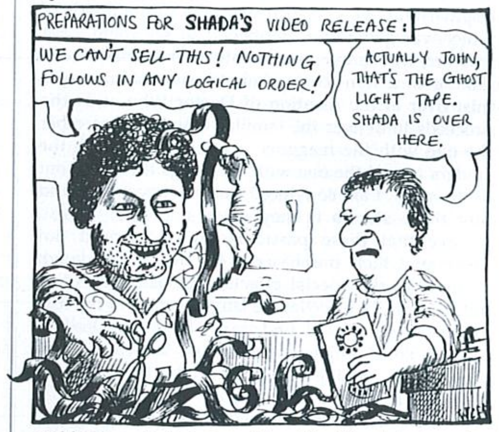
But there's another problem. Even if we had a consensus on what *are* the Hartnell classics — and the difference in opinion between those who lived through the era and those who came to its surviving fragments is very wide — nobody seems to have given any consideration to how well the classics of the 60s stand up in 1991.

This is largely irrelevant to colour material. Despite the arrival of an army of new technology, the basics of television drama technique have not altered that much in twenty years. 70s Who may suffer rampant flares, hideous hairstyles and silly sideburns, and the special effects, particularly CSO, may be slightly cruder than modern audiences are used to, but there's nothing in those episodes that they'd find completely unacceptable, as is attested by the continued success of the 70s episodes on television stations around the world. However, black and white material is different. Television technique and presentation have been revolutionised since Doctor Who began. These days, audiences are conditioned to expect slicker production and a much faster pace than did their 60s counterparts. Even the highest budgeted, most prestigious 60s dramas tend to be too slow and crude for modern viewers — so Rassilon knows what they'd make of old Doctor Who.

As we know, the show has always been underfunded. Inevitably, therefore, its production values in its most ambitious moments have tended to be borderline rather than state-of-the-art ... and what was borderline in 1964 usually looks laughable today. This curse afflicts especially the Hartnell SF extravaganzas. Terry Nation, for instance, wrote stories with wildly ambitious requirements. The production team did their best, and the results were no doubt perfectly acceptable to their 60s audience ... but to a modern viewer, with far higher expectations, something like *Dalek Invasion* is — in places — risable. The disappointment factor also rears its ugly head. In 1964 *Dalek Invasion* was a thrilling action/adventure, and that is its reputation even today — but it's hardly surprising if the post-Star Wars generation, never thinking that their idea of action/adventure is much pacier than that of the generation before, find it incredibly slow and turgid.

A major problem with using fan opinion as a guide to potential Hartnell releases is that fans, by their very nature, tend to make allowances for production failings in a way that non-fans never do. *The Web Planet* is a good example. Personally, I adore this story. It is absolutely unique in the Doctor Who canon. Its cosmic magic, weird, eerie atmosphere and sheer daring never fail to thrill me. *But* — I'm a fan. *I'm* looking for its worth and forgiving its crudity. Not so Joe Public. It certainly isn't a story to watch in company. I once saw episode four at a public screening. The sight of 200 people doubled up in hysterics at the Menoptera, and cheering "Dougal!" at the appearance of a Venom grub, is not easily forgotten. And if they're not laughing, they're bored rigid, as I discovered recently when I lent the story to a neighbour. I can't blame him, I love it, but if I'm being objective I have to admit that it's very slow and visually static. And the sets are terribly fake. And the Menoptera are embarrassingly silly. And the climax is spectacularly unspectacular. I can forgive all that ... but I can't honestly say I was surprised when *Web Planet* dropped out of the bestseller charts faster than any other two-tape release I can remember. More recruits to the "I'm not buying another one of *those* things!" brigade, I thought! Even many fans found the story beyond their tolerance, and said so in various publications. It's sad, but it's the old heightened expectations problem again. If you've never seen the story, and all you know about it is DWM hype and received fan opinion, it must be a bitter disappointment to finally watch the thing.

However, paradoxically in view of their low reputation, the historicals do not seem to suffer these problems — in fact something like *The Aztecs* can be far more palatable to a modern, non-fan audience than, say, *The Chase* or *The Keys of Marinus*. The reason, I suspect, is that historicals are far less reliant on production values than their SF cousins. Instead they are rooted in writing, plotting, characterisation and acting — aspects of which our expectations have changed relatively little in 28 years. Good writing and acting are good writing and acting, be it now or 1963. These elements have not seen the revolutions which have occured in special effects and action work. There is a world of difference between a Hartnell SF story and a 1991 Star Trek — The Next Generation, but not much separates *The Aztecs* or *The Crusade* from a modern tv presentation of a Shakespearian production. Doctor Who's camerawork may be a little more static, but that's about the only noticeable stylistic difference. Actually, the stage analogy is rather apt — the historicals are far more overtly theatrical than most Doctor Who; they are nearer to stage drama than television; in fact *The Crusade* is blocked out almost exactly like a play. Ironically, this is what has enabled the historicals to age so gracefully. *The Aztecs* is a prime example, always a stunning a delightful surprise to those coming to it fresh, as was demonstrated by the BSB weekend. So many people go into that story in a cynical frame of mind, only to fall in love with it by the end of part one. Heightened expectations certainly aren't a problem here. Nobody, it seems, watches their first historical willingly. After all (adopts adolescent whine), everybody *knows* they're boring, don't they? We usually have to be forced into watching one by a friend who knows better — and so often we get the shock of our lives. It's an old story, told whenever two or three fans are gathered together. And if it's true for us, it'd probably be true of Joe Public too. In fact I know of at least one non-fan recently exposed to some Hartnell material who found the SF stories staggeringly dull but was pleasantly surprised by, and full of praise for, *The Aztecs*. He's not the only one. The story's impending release is long overdue.


PREPARATIONS FOR SHADA'S VIDEO RELEASE:
WE CAN'T SELL THIS! NOTHING FOLLOWS IN ANY LOGICAL ORDER!
ACTUALLY JOHN, THAT'S THE GHOST LIGHT TAPE. SHADA IS OVER HERE.

What, then, is the solution to these problems? If the fans can't be relied upon to provide a guide to the cream of Who for video release, who can? Well, it seems to me that what is needed is somebody who can actually sit down with all the existing stories, watch them and make an objective judgement of their relative merits. Somebody, for instance, who could've looked at *The Web Planet* and *Dalek Invasion* and advised that, despite their reputations, both had dated badly, and that *The Aztecs* or *The Time Meddler* would be safer bets; less likely to bore or disappoint their purchasers, and very likely to give them a pleasant surprise. Somebody whose perspective is not clouded by received fan opinion or dewy-eyed nostalgia, but who is in touch with fan feeling, preferably the radical cutting edge of fan opinion, where reassessment of hitherto-accepted dogma and rediscovery of lost gems is going on all the time. In short, BBC Video need an expert running their whole selection procedure — probably a fan, but one with an unconventional outlook on the show; a fan capable of divorcing himself from fandom and ruthlessly vetting the quality of every story. God forbid that JNT should waltz into such a position. As the era tapes have revealed, his selective abilities are zero (*Snowmen* 2 indeed! A trained monkey could tell you *Web of Fear* 1 is better!), and his much-vaunted 'unique knowledge of the show' is ropey in the extreme. Besides which, the show can do without the man who killed it hanging around to organise the wake.

In conclusion, let me say that BBC Video *are* doing a very good job. Their output is undoubtedly much better than it was, and in ironing out the many irritants which marred their early releases they have proved commendably responsive to fan opinion. The 1991 schedule has included many richly deserving stories, and the 1992 line-up maintains the improved standard of selection. At last, underrated and neglected material is being released, and the 525-line ban has been abandoned to give us Delgado's video debut (although commercial considerations still seem too influential; witness the decision to release *Attack of the Cybermen* and not the far superior *Vengeance on Varos*). However, let's not forget we've had some very narrow escapes. Alongside the excellent releases, we have at one time or another been threatened with plans to exhume *The Keys of Marinus, The Chase* and *The Mutants* ... and even my immense pleasure at the overdue inclusion of *Image of the Fendahl* in next year's schedule cannot help me shuddering at the story doing the rounds that BBC Video originally planned to subject us to *Underworld*. I'd like to think that the abrupt abortion of all these horrors were due to BBC Video having their fingers on the pulse of fandom, or hearing the deafening cries of "Oh God, no!" But far more likely is the rumour that, by sheer good fortune, they happen to employ a fan, who regularly alerts them when they've inadvertently scheduled a clanger for release. It is probably thanks only to this public-spirited person that we've been spared *The Corn of Nimon, Warriors on the Cheap* and an extended *Silly Nemesis* (*Sillier Nemesis*?!?).

So, if things are better than they were, there is still room for improvement. After all, any selection process which sees *Dalek Invasion of Earth* released two years before *The Aztecs*, or *Day of the Daleks* given priority over *Inferno*, is clearly flawed. Playing to the insular audience of fanboys is all very well, but it is time to look beyond such limited horizons, to seek to expand the market of non-fans by giving them quality material that will bring them back to buy more. It was partly Doctor Who's obsession with its own cult that destroyed it as a living, continuing entity. It would be a terrible waste if the same failing were allowed to undermine its living posterity on video.

PHŒNIX PRESENTS

THE

Renegade

The Doctor... The Anniversary... The Convention

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at
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JON PERTWEE

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If you are registering more than one person please supply relevant names for our records and their badge

DWB

If you wish to keep this form,please use a photocopy instead.

A COLLECTOR'S GUIDE TO THE TARGET RANGE OF 'DOCTOR WHO' BOOKS: Part One – The Seventies

WITH THE season twenty-six opener *Battlefield* now available in book form, Target Books has completed all possible televised releases of its highly popular and long-running Doctor Who range. Only six screened stories have yet to be novelised, these being, in order of transmission : *Power of the Daleks, Evil of the Daleks, The Pirate Planet, City of Death, Resurrection of the Daleks* and *Revelation of the Daleks*. Also missing is the never-completed story *Shada*. There are various reasons why these have never appeared on book shelves, upon which I will elaborate in a later part of this article.

As a celebration of the range, which recently celebrated its eighteenth anniversary, I have pieced together a retrospective. It is not a detailed analysis of writing styles or text content, but rather a year by year review of the releases and the many changes — including those in attitude — having taken place since 1973. Included is general data appertaining to each year, as well as information on the writers and illustrators involved. Information given is based on paperback releases only.

In the beginning

Target Books was created in the early 70s as a new children's range of paperbacks. It was opened as a division of Tandem Books, which urgently required books in a hurry to launch their subsidiary list. It was the Target editor, Richard Henwood, working under the senior editor for Tandem, Bob Tanner, who had the task of searching for hardback books which could be released in paperback form. The titles he finally obtained included three Doctor Who hardbacks bought from Frederick Muller Ltd., these being *Doctor Who and the Daleks, Doctor Who and the Crusaders* and *Doctor Who and the Zarbi*; the first two written by David Whitaker, the latter by Bill Strutton.

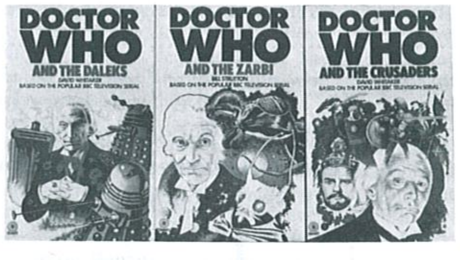
As the first script editor for Doctor Who, David Whitaker was given the job of raising a basic storyline from Donald Wilson's four-page programme guide. It was he who emphasised certain parts of the Doctor's character, particularly the mystery and his gentlemanly irascibility. He also decided that Who should refer to the mystery surrounding the character, rather than any form of amnesia.

It was in 1964 that Whitaker was approached to write a novelisation of Terry Nation's first Dalek script. Dalekmania had hit the streets, and Whitaker aided Nation in helping it along. He immediately accepted the offer, only to realise later that he had taken on much more work than he had originally bargained for. There was an enormous amount of work involved in converting the television script to novel form and much rewriting was required. However, Whitaker was quite pleased with the finished result, which was published in hardback under the title *Doctor Who in an Exciting Adventure with the Daleks*, and followed it up a year later with the novelisation *Doctor Who and the Crusaders*, adapted from his own 1965 television script, *The Crusade*. This was the first historical Doctor Who story to see print. Also in 1965 the Dalek book was reprinted by Armada Paperbacks, a subsidiary of Mayfair Books Ltd.

As script editor, David Whitaker had a wealth of television writing talent in Associated London Scripts, an institution of writers formed by the original writers for comedian Tony Hancock. Of the initial fourteen scripts accepted by Whitaker, nine came from ALS writers. One of these contributors was Bill Strutton, one of many Australian writers (Anthony Coburn being another) who travelled to England in the early 60s seeking tutelage from the Writer's Guild of Britain, whose writers had been considerably more successful in the realm of mass media writing than their Australian counterparts. He had proved himself a competent script writer to Sydney Newman, having penned episodes for the latter's creation, The Avengers. Doctor Who was a natural progression. In 1965 he was approached to novelise his script of *The Web Planet* in much the same way as David Whitaker had been the previous year.

All three of the Frederick Muller hardbacks were only partially successful and they soon found their way into the children's section of public libraries. It was here that they remained until chanced upon by Richard Henwood for Target eight years later.

1973



May	*Doctor Who and the Daleks* — David Whitaker	(25p)
	Doctor Who and the Zarbi — Bill Strutton	(25p)
	Doctor Who and the Crusaders — David Whitaker	(25p)

On May 3rd the three purchased titles began to appear on the bookshelves, released simultaneously in paperback form. The covers were striking and colourful; the Doctor Who title lettering was in large, bold black print, in a representation of the series logo of the time. This was a trend which would continue throughout the releases.

Artwork

Target knew that the sales of the three books would depend much upon the attractiveness of the covers. Initially they contacted Frank Bellamy who was widely known for his very professional comic spread artwork. He had worked regularly on the Eagle comic and had produced some Doctor Who artwork for the Radio Times. This last work had impressed Tandem, so they asked him to take on the three pieces; because of other work commitments he had to turn them down. It was then that Target turned to Chris Achilleos.

Circumstances had forced Achilleos into progressing with his art. Born in Cyprus, he moved to England at an early age and soon found himself having problems reading and writing English at school. Practical subjects he could cope with. Increasingly he took to drawing as a hobby, and when he left school he started a college course in Technical and Scientific Illustration. He found this to be the wrong course and spent much of his time drawing centre spreads in the style of his major influence, Frank Bellamy. His tutor at Hornsey College of Art noticed the direction in which Achilleos' work was moving and later helped him to gain a commission from a new publishing firm, Mitchell Beasly. He worked to a tight schedule with Patrick Moore on a book of the moon landings of 1969, his first published work. After college he took several short-term positions of employment.

It was then that he joined Tandem Books, working under a freelance Art Director called Brian Boyle. After a year and a half spent doing mostly paste-ups, with the occasional cover of his own, Achilleos left there and joined an agency for freelance artists. Some time later he was contacted by Brian Boyle who asked if he would like to do the covers for three Doctor Who books they were releasing. Boyle asked him to produce them in the style of Frank Bellamy's Radio Times work.

The first cover to be completed was *The Zarbi*. After gaining a basic plotine of the story, Achilleos had become excited at the prospect of elaborately painted giant ants. The BBC refused to allow this, insisting that the Zarbi should resemble those seen in the *Web Planet* television story, so he had to alter it. The Dalek cover was a psychedelic explosion of colour. Achilleos wanted to make the Daleks noticeably different from those seen on tv; his idea was that there were many different ranks of Daleks differing in design and colour, so who was to say that these ones were wrong? They were simply different, whilst retaining their basic shape. Achilleos received virtually no reference material for the Daleks, and interestingly were virtually identical to the Daleks appearing in TV21 comic. The *Daleks* artwork also showed a rather lopsided pink TARDIS.

Text Illustrations

The trio of paperbacks each contained sketch illustrations, all copyright of Frederick Muller Ltd. *The Daleks* has twelve by Arnold Schwartzman, *The Zarbi* has fifteen by John Wood, and *The Crusaders* has fifteen by Henry Fox.

General

The immediately noticeable thing about the text is David Whitaker's decision to write the Dalek tale in the first person, through the eyes of Ian Chesterton. For this reason it is not difficult to understand why Whitaker's novelisation was so problematic in its conversion from script form. Very few stories went on to be novelised in this way. The second noticeable observation is the use of 'Who' as the Doctor's surname. This mistake is made in all three books and is rather curious as it was Whitaker who originally decided that the 'Who' should refer to the Doctor's mystery rather than any other possible meaning of the word. Then there is *Tardis*, written in italics as if it is the name of the ship, rather than the initials signifying its use.

To aid the launch of the Target range, a promotion was carried at the back of each book: all Target books ordered by mail would be rewarded with a free three-colour Target badge and entry into a draw which could win the recipient a year's set of Target books.

The first three Doctor Who titles outsold everyone's expectations. They were a phenomenal success, selling out and quickly being scheduled for reprinting. *Doctor Who and the Daleks* reached the children's books top ten and Target realised that sales this grand could not stop here — they needed more titles. They contacted the BBC and negotiated the rights to exclusively novelise the remaining stories.

The rights were renewable every five years, the contract stressing novelisations of televised stories only. The permission of the script-writer is required before any project can proceed, and royalties from sales are split proportionately between the novelist, the script-writer and the BBC.

1974

DOCTOR WHO AND THE AUTON INVASION
DOCTOR WHO AND THE CAVE-MONSTERS
DOCTOR WHO AND THE DOOMSDAY WEAPON
DOCTOR WHO AND THE DAY OF THE DALEKS
DOCTOR WHO AND THE DÆMONS
DOCTOR WHO AND THE SEA-DEVILS
DOCTOR WHO AND THE ABOMINABLE SNOWMEN
DOCTOR WHO AND THE CURSE OF PELADON

Jan	*Doctor Who and the Auton Invasion* — Terrance Dicks	(25p)
	Doctor Who and the Cave Monsters — Malcolm Hulke	(25p)
Mar	*Doctor Who and the Doomsday Weapon* — Malcolm Hulke	(30p)
	Doctor Who and the Day of the Daleks — Terrance Dicks	(30p)
May	*Doctor Who and The Dæmons* — Barry Letts	(30p)
June	*Doctor Who and The Sea Devils* — Malcolm Hulke	(30p)
Nov	*Doctor Who and The Curse of Peladon* — Brian Hayles	(30p)
	Doctor Who and The Abominable Snowmen — Terrance Dicks	(30p)

Several months passed before no less than eight original novelisations were released during 1974. Three of them had headings different from the tv stories upon which they were based, the first three being adaptations of (respectively) *Spearhead from Space, Doctor Who and the Silurians* and *Colony in Space*. It was decided early on to change the titles of those stories which Target considered not gripping enough to attract prospective young readers. A list of current Doctor Who titles appeared in the front of each book but, curiously, were not always listed in order of publication.

Writers

The Auton Invasion was the first title to be released, penned by Terrance Dicks, and for the first time we read those immortal words 'wheezing' and 'groaning' in reference to the TARDIS. Dicks was to become a more than regular novelist for the Doctor Who range, his contributions spanning the eighteen years of televised releases.

Dicks came to Doctor Who as script editor, after previously working as an advertising copywriter and a tv and radio script-writer. He was responsible for many new and popular additions to the programme, including the Master and the Time Lords.

After the Target editor, Richard Henwood, had arranged the rights through the BBC to novelise other stories, he approached Terrance Dicks at his office to ask if he knew who could write for them. Dicks offered his services and also put forward other possible names. The early days of his Doctor Who novelisations coincided almost exactly with his eventual departure from the BBC this same year, but his connections with the series were far from finished.

In those days before video recorders Dicks arranged showings at the BBC of the stories he was to novelise, taking notes as he viewed. He was also supplied with a copy of the script, to which he adhered closely.

Malcolm Hulke came to Doctor Who via the Pathfinders serials created and written jointly with Eric Plaice. The connection to Doctor Who came through Pathfinders producer Sydney Newman. For the first season of Doctor Who Hulke wrote a teleplay called *The Hidden Planet*, which showed Earth having an identical twin planet on the opposite side of the sun. Unfortunately, as a money-saving scheme many existing stories were extended from the standard four episodes, and sadly Hulke's script was one of those axed. This was the last we heard of this talented script-writer until 1967 when he wrote *The Faceless Ones* with David Ellis.

Target contacted Hulke and as a result of the conversation he novelised the first three of his own Pertwee scripts, with the others to follow. Barry Letts was asked to novelise the Guy Leopold script *The Dæmons*. In fact Guy Leopold was a pen name arising from Robert Sloman's son Guy and Barry Letts's middle name, Leopold, for Letts and Sloman were the joint writers of *The Dæmons* tv story.

Brian Hayles is best known on Doctor Who for his creation of the Ice Warriors, although his first televised script for the programme was *The Celestial Toymaker* in 1966. He wrote six scripts in all, two for each of the first three Doctors, and his first novelisation was *The Curse of Peladon*.

Artwork

The artwork for all eight covers was again provided by Chris Achilleos. There was a distinct change of style from the three releases of the year before. In most cases these were larger-than-life representations of monsters from the story, in true colour, with the Doctor's likeness appearing as a monotone sketch. This style became almost a trademark of Achilleos', and instantly recognisable.

The materials used on his various pictures consisted of waterproof inks, watercolour or acrylic paints on artboard or 100% rag paper.

The Cave Monsters was the first cover he was asked to work on this year, though it was released simultaneously with *The Auton Invasion*.

Text Illustrations

All eight books released during 1974 were illustrated. The first four contained eleven drawings each by Chris Achilleos, while the latter four had six each by Alan Willow. Willow's work was skilful and proved popular with Target. He was to illustrate all other titles up to and including *The Green Death*.

General

It is interesting to note that of the eight releases this year, seven were adapted from Pertwee stories. The reasons for this were obvious. They were the first adventures to be transmitted in colour, which helped to revitalise the public's interest in the programme, but more importantly, Pertwee was the current Doctor and his stories were the most recent.

The sole Troughton novelisation featured the highly popular monsters, the Yeti. Target knew that this name, like the Daleks, was likely to sell well.

The opening chapters of *The Doomsday Weapon* introduce the Doctor's new assistant, Jo Grant, in a series of events that were not in the original tv programme. These scenes were added because at the time Jo's debut story, *Terror of the Autons*, had not yet been novelised. Thus, when the latter book did appear the following year, the two books contradict one another in their efforts to introduce the new companion.

1975

DOCTOR WHO AND THE CYBERMEN
DOCTOR WHO AND THE GIANT ROBOT
DOCTOR WHO AND THE TERROR OF THE AUTONS
DOCTOR WHO AND THE GREEN DEATH
DOCTOR WHO AND THE PLANET OF THE SPIDERS
DOCTOR WHO THE THREE DOCTORS

Feb	*Doctor Who and the Cybermen* — Gerry Davis	(35p)
Mar	*Doctor Who and the Giant Robot* — Terrance Dicks	(35p)
Apr	*Doctor Who and the Terror of the Autons* — Terrance Dicks	(35p)
Aug	*Doctor Who and the Green Death* — Malcolm Hulke	(35p)
Oct	*Doctor Who and the Planet of the Spiders* — Terrance Dicks	(35p)
Nov	*Doctor Who — The Three Doctors* — Terrance Dicks	(35p)

General

The tenth anniversary story *The Three Doctors* appeared, logically, without its "Doctor Who and" prefix.

The titles of the first two books of the year differed from their tv counterparts, being originally *The Moonbase* and *Robot* respectively.

From the *Giant Robot* release the cover paintings, the majority vignetted, now appeared with wide borders and adorned by the new logo which made its debut in Jon Pertwee's last season, minus the diamond surround. In addtion the red, yellow and blue Target logo appeared within a square surround, and the spines, until now various colours, became a uniform white with coloured lettering. With a very few exceptions (*Genesis of the Daleks, Web of Fear, Carnival of Monsters, Ark in Space* and *Brain of Morbius*) this white spine and back cover would continue until *The Keys of Marinus* in 1980.

Artwork

Six books were released this year, and the slight drop was due to the covers, During the previous year's releases Chris Achilleos had expressed a preference to stop his Doctor Who artwork as it was taking up much of his time, leaving no opportunity to work on other commissions that were coming in. When he told Target, they accepted his decision and told him they would attempt to find

>

somebody else. This proved more difficult than expected and they kept asking him to complete one more to give them more time in their search. In the meantime Tandem received many letters for him from readers and the children's editor wanted to start a fan club for him, but Achilleos rejected this notion, flattered but not relishing the idea of answering a multitude of letters.

Brian Boyle then asked Peter Brookes — with whom Achilleos had worked while at Tandem — if he would tackle a couple of covers. Brookes, known to Doctor Who fans through his work for the Radio Times and 10th Anniversary Special, completed four : *The Giant Robot, Terror of the Autons, The Green Death* and *Planet of the Spiders*. His graphic style was different from Achilleos' and Target received many letters asking what had happened, leading them to approach Achilleos once again.

Text Illustrations

The Green Death was the final novelisation to be illustrated. *The Cybermen, Terror of the Autons* and *The Green Death* each feature six illustrations, again by Alan Willow.

1976

Jan	*Doctor Who and the Loch Ness Monster* — Terrance Dicks	(40p)
Feb	*Doctor Who and the Tenth Planet* — Gerry Davis	(40p)
	Doctor Who and the Dinosaur Invasion — Malcolm Hulke	(40p)
Mar	*Doctor Who and the Ice Warriors* — Brian Hayles	(40p)
May	*Doctor Who and the Revenge of the Cybermen* — Terrance Dicks	(40p)
July	*Doctor Who and the Genesis of the Daleks* — Terance Dicks	(45p)
Aug	*Doctor Who and the Web of Fear* — Terrance Dicks	(45p)
Sept	*Doctor Who and the Space War* — Terrance Dicks	(45p)
Oct	*Doctor Who and the Planet of the Daleks* — Terrance Dicks	(45p)
Dec	*Doctor Who and the Pyramids of Mars* — Terrance Dicks	(45p)

General

Target Books was now listed as a division of Tandem Publishing Ltd, a Howard & Wyndham company. By the latter part of the year Target Books had become a division of Wyndham Publications Ltd.

The Space War, the novelisation of *Frontier in Space*, was the last of ten books to be released with a title differing from that of the televised script. The first two books of the year were also in disguise, being originally *Terror of the Zygons* and *Invasion of the Dinosaurs*.

Artwork

The busiest year so far for Target's Doctor Who range saw the release of ten novelisations. All ten cover paintings came from Chris Achilleos, making for a heavy work schedule — this after he had already asked to stop. Because his cover artwork was so popular the designs were left entirely up to him, the finished product simply handed over. However, when the sound-effect "KKLAK!" was splashed across the finished artwork for *The Dinosaur Invasion* the piece was accepted but Achilleos was asked by Tandem not to repeat this on subsequent covers.

Writers

Terrance Dicks entered double figures with his novelisations, this year doubling his output of the two previous years. These and subsequent titles won him work with other publishers, and he began to write other book series such as The Mounties, Star Quest and The Baker Street Irregulars. This last, like Doctor Who, was to prove immensely popular abroad. However, rather than being labelled as a writer of children's books he prefers to regard himself as a writer, period.

1977

Jan	*Doctor Who and the Carnival of Monsters* — Terrance Dicks	(50p)
Feb	*Doctor Who and the Seeds of Doom* — Philip Hinchcliffe	(50p)
Mar	*Doctor Who and the Dalek Invasion of Earth* — Terrance Dicks	(50p)
Apr	*Doctor Who and the Claws of Axos* — Terrance Dicks	(50p)
May	*Doctor Who and the Ark in Space* — Ian Marter	(60p)
June	*Doctor Who and the Brain of Morbius* — Terrance Dicks	(60p)
Aug	*Doctor Who and the Planet of Evil* — Terrance Dicks	(60p)
Sept	*Doctor Who and the Mutants* — Terrance Dicks	(60p)
Oct	*Doctor Who and the Deadly Assassin* — Terrance Dicks	(60p)
Nov	*Doctor Who and the Talons of Weng-Chiang*	(60p)
Dec	*Doctor Who and the Masque of Mandragora* — Philip Hinchcliffe	(60p)

General

Target Books was this year taken over by WH Allen & Co Ltd, but remained a Howard & Wyndham company.

Despite the turbulent period, the company released eleven titles this year, the greatest number yet for any one year. The promotion involving the badge and the prize draw was finally withdrawn and the Target range of books were listed alphabetically at the rear of each book, giving ISBN numbers alongside. The square surround to the Target logo disappeared, as did the cover border, from *The Mutants* onwards. This last was also notable for being the only book to feature the words "Dr Who and ..." on the spine, rather than the usual "Doctor Who and ...".

Tomb of the Cybermen was originally scheduled for release in July of this year, but was delayed due to the late arrival of Gerry Davis's manuscript.

The release of *Carnival of Monsters* completed the novelisations for season ten, the first season to be fully novelised.

Artwork

Target now had a new art director called Don Rody. Chris Achilleos was given five more covers to do. He told Rody that he wished to stop doing Doctor Who covers, and that *The Ark in Space* was to be his final contribution to the televised range. Rody accepted his reasons but finding an artist to replace Achilleos' considerable talents was difficult to say the least. A few names were tried out, the initial two being Mike Little and Jeff Cummins.

Mike Little completed four covers : *Brain of Morbius, Planet of Evil, The Deadly Assassin* and *Masque of Mandragora*. These were his only contributions to the Target series.

Cummins was the first artist to break away from the Frank Bellamy style; his almost lifelike cover artwork for *The Mutants* and *The Talons of Weng-Chiang* proved extremely successful and popular with the fan readership, and were to remain so throughout the years.

Writers

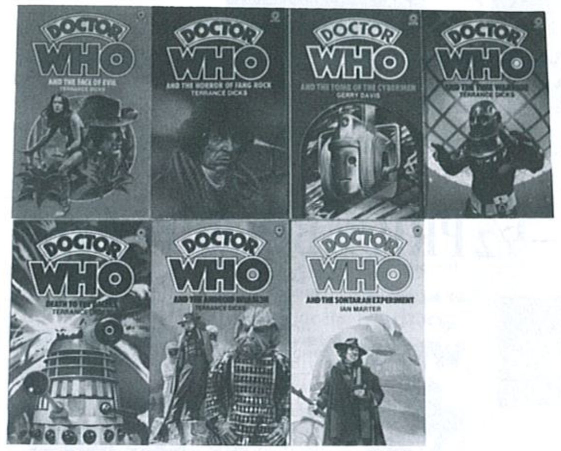
Ian Marter was the first, and to date only, Doctor Who actor to have made the transition from screen to novel writer with his first book *The Ark in Space*, which featured his character Harry Sullivan.

It was Tom Baker and a friend who first suggested to Marter that he try his hand at a Target novelisation. He contacted the publisher and chose two stories, *The Ark in Space* and *The Sontaran Experiment*. *The Ark in Space* was a favourite story of his and *The Sontaran Experiment* was a sequel of sorts which he felt that, being only a two-part story, no one else would be interested in novelising. Marter began by writing two specimen chapters for his own benefit as well as for Target. The editor was pleased with the result, so he continued and completed his first Doctor Who novelisation, adapted from the story by Robert Holmes. For reference material he used a copy of the story, when available, and a copy of the camera scripts (the broadcast version). He rapidly dropped an early idea to write the narrative in the first person from the point of view of Harry Sullivan, in a manner similar to that of the first David Whitaker novel, due to technical difficulties, in particular the fact that Harry did not appear in many critical scenes.

Philip Hinchcliffe followed Barry Letts as regular producer on Doctor Who, and as both of his novelisations this year hailed from his period as producer, he had firsthand knowledge of the stories.

Terrance Dicks' schedule continued to increase; he was now required to produce very nearly one manuscript per month. At this time he saw the conversion of a script to a book as an interesting technical challenge and was annoyed when people tried to imply that, with the script and video readily available, his job virtually completed itself. The task of transferring the visual element on to the pages of the book and making it stand up in its own right proved to be hard work, but also an enjoyable challenge. Having so far novelised 21 stories Dicks looked on novelisation as a problem, but a problem he could handle.

1978



Jan	*Doctor Who and the Face of Evil* — Terrance Dicks	(60p)
Mar	*Doctor Who and the Horror of Fang Rock* — Terrance Dicks	(60p)
May	*Doctor Who and the Tomb of the Cybermen* — Gerry Davis	(60p)
June	*Doctor Who and the Time Warrior* — Terrance Dicks	(60p)
July	*Doctor Who — Death to the Daleks* — Terrance Dicks	(60p)
Nov	*Doctor Who and the Android Invasion* — Terrance Dicks	(60p)
Dec	*Doctor Who and the Sontaran Experiment* — Ian Marter	(60p)

General

Target Books this year renewed its contract with the BBC to exclusively produce novelisations of the televised Doctor Who stories.

Death to the Daleks was the second title to appear without the "Doctor Who and ..." prefix, for the same reason that it would not make sense.

Target adopted a new policy of portraying only Tom Baker's likeness as the Doctor on the covers, as he was the current Doctor and it was deemed unlikely that many young children would recognise Baker's predecessors. It was thought that the monster/s of the piece would better attract young buyers to the other Doctor's tales, and this policy continued throughout Tom Baker's tenure as the Doctor.

Writers

Ian Marter followed up his debut last year with *The Sontaran Experiment*. This proved to be a difficult novelisation as he was obliged to bring the two-parter up to the normal book length. It was his tendency to overwrite rather than underwrite that helped him to cope with this challenge admirably. In writing this and others he made a point of highlighting the visual aspects of the story in narrative terms. Curiously he was to view the story for the first time at a convention, years after he had completed the book. By his own admittance, passing references to members of his family and friends appeared in this and subsequent novelisations; these came in the form of minor characters or planet names and are difficult to spot.

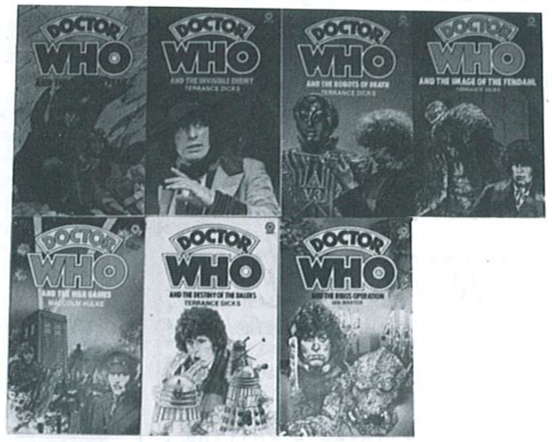
Robert Holmes had hoped to novelise his script for *The Time Warrior*, but abandoned the attempt after completing only a few pages. Terrance Dicks then took over the project, but Holmes' contribution still survives in the form of the prologue describing how Linx came to crash on Earth.

Artwork

The strength of the previous year's two covers won Jeff Cummins more commissions and he completed covers for the first three releases of this year. The remaining four were given to another newcomer to Doctor Who cover artwork, Roy Knipe.

The Horror of Fang Rock saw the start of a general change from vignetted cover illustrations to the generally-preferred full jacket paintings.

1979



Jan	*Doctor Who and the Hand of Fear* — Terrance Dicks	(60p)
Mar	*Doctor Who and the Invisible Enemy* — Terrance Dicks	(60p)
May	*Doctor Who and the Robots of Death* — Terrance Dicks	(70p)
July	*Doctor Who and the Image of the Fendahl* — Terrance Dicks	(70p)
Sept	*Doctor Who and the War Games* — Malcolm Hulke	(75p)
Nov	*Doctor Who and the Destiny of the Daleks* — Terrance Dicks	(75p)
Dec	*Doctor Who and the Ribos Operation* — Ian Marter	(75p)

Writers

Terrance Dicks had now passed the thirty mark for his novelisations; all but three were from the Jon Pertwee and Tom Baker eras.

Malcolm Hulke completed his novelisation contributions to Doctor Who with *The War Games* — his seventh title — from his ten-part script co-written with Terrance Dicks. The action was necessarily compacted to fit into the page count, but surprisingly little was actually cut.

Ian Marter's third title, the first of the Key to Time sextet, was chosen for him by Target, as were the remainder of his novelisations from then on.

Artwork

Roy Knipe contributed his final two first edition covers with *The Hand of Fear* and *The Invisible Enemy*.

Another name new to Doctor Who cover artwork was John Geary, who completed four of the five remaining titles. However, like his predecessors Mike Little and Roy Knipe, his stay was short-lived, although Geary and Knipe were to be commissioned to paint reprint covers.

Andrew Skilleter completed his first work for Target with *Destiny of the Daleks*. This proved popular with the art director, Mike Brett, particularly his representation of Tom Baker, and was to earn Skilleter many more commissions.

General

Colour text on the back cover of *The Ribos Operation* proclaimed it to be the first of the Key to Time novels, a feature that would continue next year for the remaining five novelisations from that season.

TY POWER

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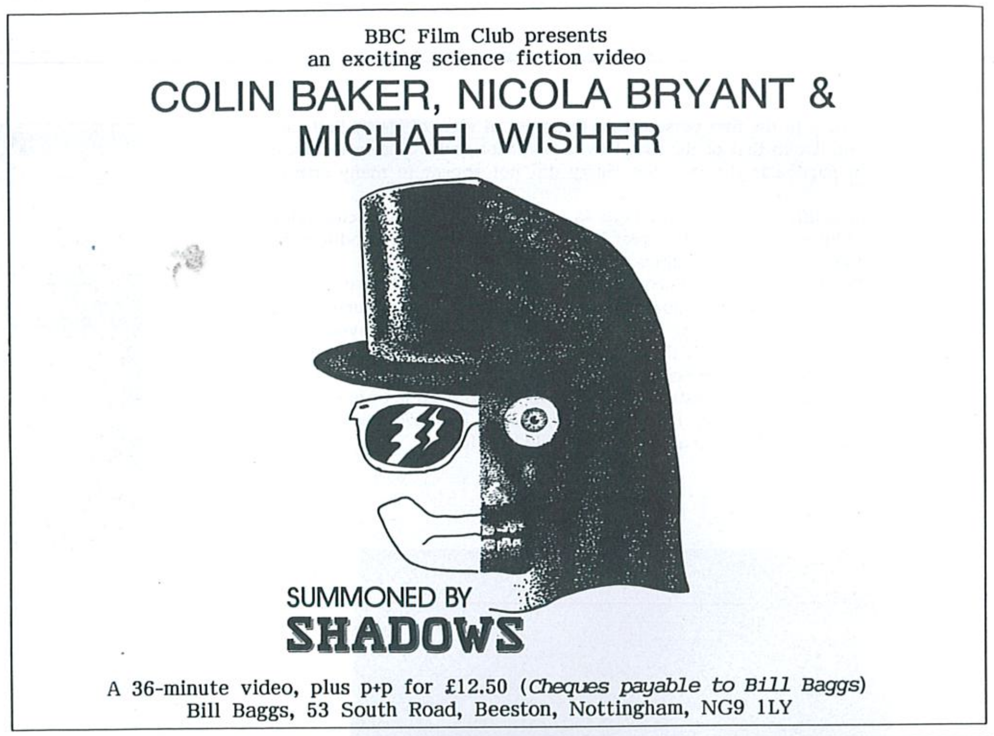

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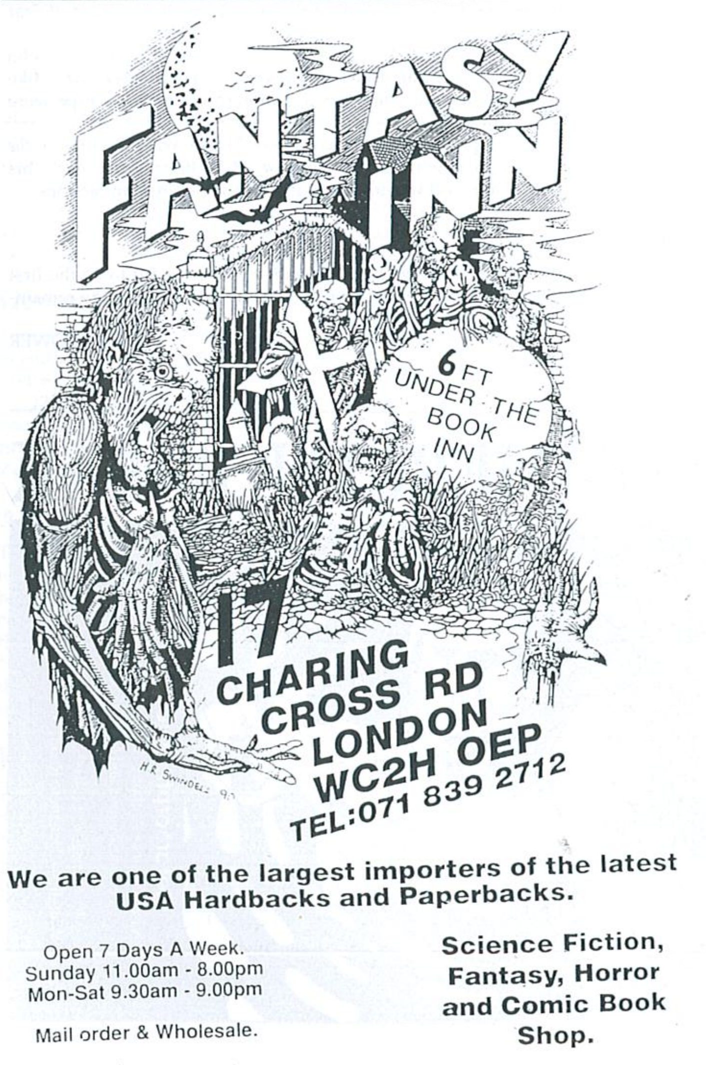

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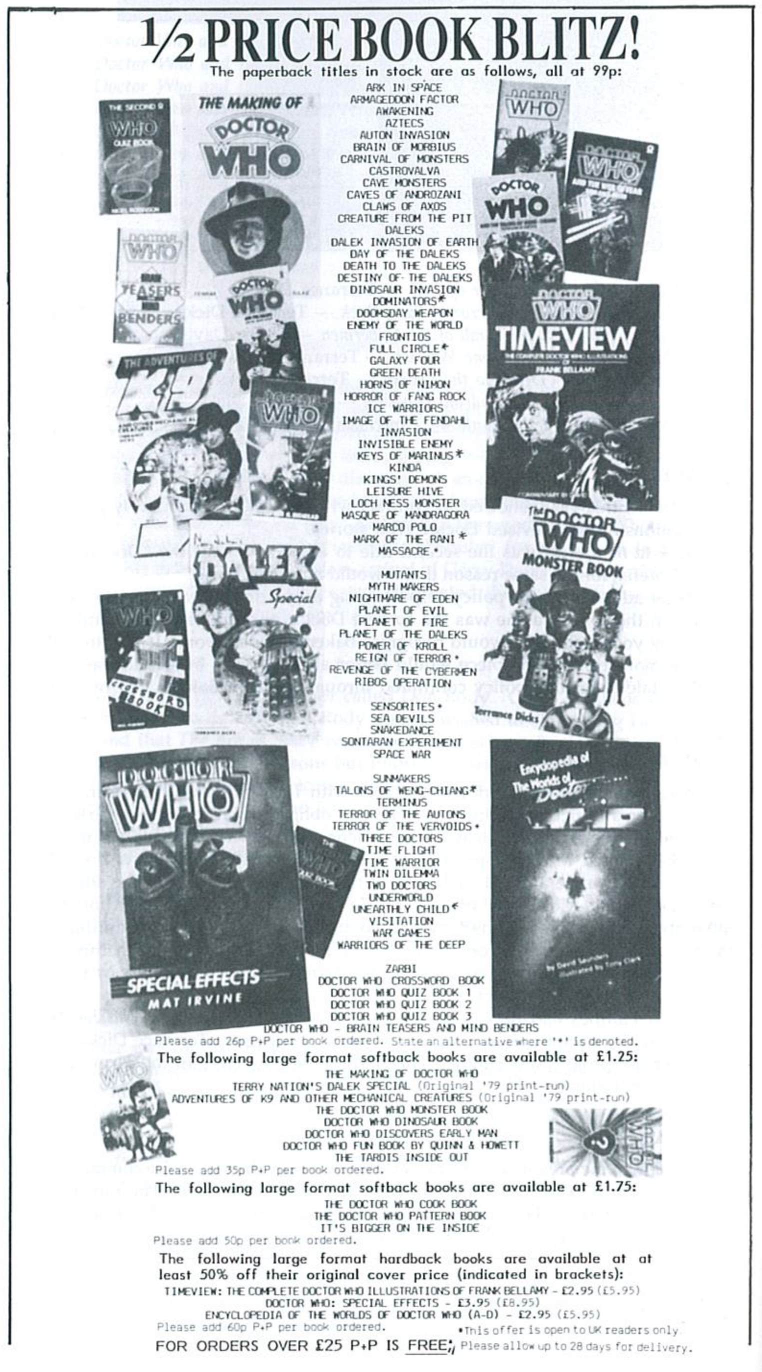

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Nigel Robinson interview

Nigel Robinson is perhaps best known to us as writer of four Doctor Who script novelisations: *The Sensorites, The Time Meddler, The Underwater Menace* and *The Edge of Destruction*. But he was also Doctor Who editor at W.H. Allen for a time, and is author of the third book in the Timewyrm series of new stories. TY POWER spoke to him about these and other subjects.

TY POWER : Firstly, can you fill us in with some of your early professional background?

NIGEL ROBINSON : There isn't really a lot to fill in. I went to university. I left university. I took a year off from university, in which time I wrote a quiz book on Tolkien, who wrote Lord of the Rings. I sent it off to a publisher, who happened to be WH Allen. They published it, and it just so happened that they published Doctor Who books as well and I said, "Hey, I like Doctor Who; let me do some Doctor Who quiz books," which they did. I did about three quiz books and one crossword book — and from that I was offered the post of editor of Doctor Who ... not planned at all.

How long did the quiz books and the crossword book take to construct?

Well, the quiz books took an average of two and a half months each, which is working at my own pace. The crossword book was written in about six weeks, because that was a very rushed job. They wanted it for Christmas.

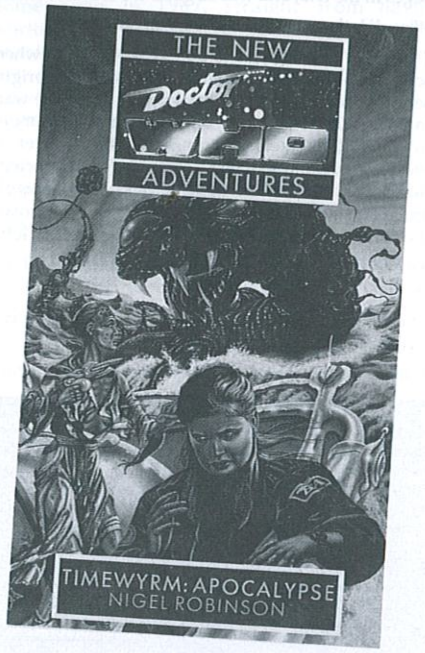
What did you use as research?

It varied. For the first quiz book I relied very much on the Target novelisations which were out at the time. John Nathan-Turner had just joined the programme, and he and Eric Saward allowed me access to all the Doctor Who scripts. That was for the first book. For the second book I had access to a lot more videos; the third book was quite literally written more or less off the top of my head, because I had accumulated so much stuff from reading scripts and watching videos that I knew most of the stuff anyway and it was just a matter of going back to the scripts to check up points I wasn't too sure of.

You've explained how, but when did the appointment at Target books come about?

I think it was July 1984. I stayed with them until 1987.

What changes, if any, did you implement whilst you were there?



I think the major change was going back to earlier stories. Before I joined Target as an editor they were concentrating very much on stories of the current Doctor, who was then Peter Davison. I got back to a lot of the older stories, especially Patrick Troughton and William Hartnell, and what I was very keen on doing also was novelising the historicals. Very few had been novelised — I think the feeling had been that they were too boring. Obviously they weren't, so I got those off the ground. By the time I'd left I think we were well on the way to producing almost a complete run of Doctor Who stories. I think during my 'reign', as it were, we finished up all the Jon Pertwee stories. I also started the Companions series; that was with Turlough, Harry Sullivan and K-9. In the end they died a death, not because of bad sales or bad writing, but because it was felt that there wasn't a strong enough market for companion spin-offs. So I think perhaps in hindsight that was a wrong decision to take.

What novel would you say was the first that you could call your own, from commissioning, all the way through?

Very difficult to say. I would think probably *The Mind Robber*, the Peter Ling book. That was certainly one of the first I did commission. Also *The Ark*. And there's this colourful story behind *The Ark*, because I was trying to track down Paul Erickson, the original script-writer, to see if he wanted to novelise it. And I tried all the avenues: the BBC, fandom, even the producer's office, and no one seemed to know where Paul Erickson lived. I was at the end of my wits; I didn't know how to contact Paul Erickson. In the end I found his address in the phone book!

I believe that at one stage you tried to get Eric Saward's Dalek stories novelised.

Oh, that's right, yes. Eric was very keen to do them. Because of contractual wranglings between ourselves, Eric, and the owner of Terry Nation's copyright, they were never pulled off. I don't think they will ever be novelised.

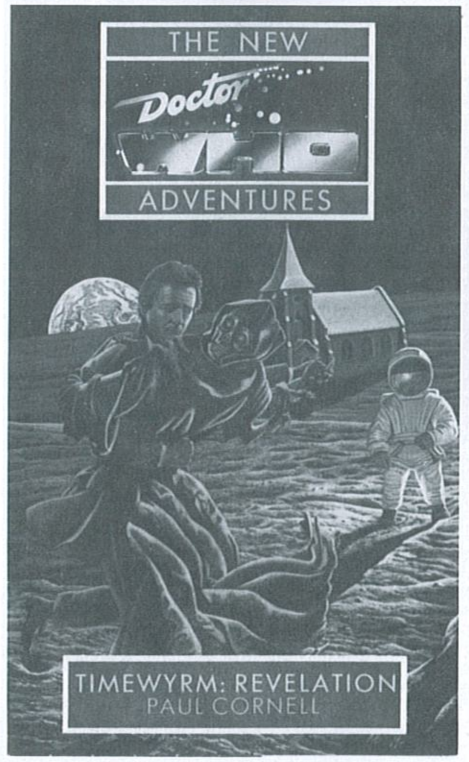
Did you negotiate for the Troughton Dalek stories, or the Douglas Adams tales?

I tried for *The Pirate Planet* with Douglas Adams. I approached his agent who asked for what was quite an extraordinarily high figure, which in some ways he was justified in asking as Douglas Adams is a very big top-selling author, able to command advances of half a million dollars on his books. Obviously WH Allen was not prepared to pay that amount of money, and I don't blame them because, no matter how well the Doctor Who books sell, they do not sell well enough to justify a very large advance. So, in the end that fell flat on its face. Those were dealings with Douglas's agent, and to be fair on Douglas, he did ring me up personally after to explain the situation in a very amicable way. I don't think they ever will be novelised; that's not to say that Douglas Adams is a 'greedy' person. He understands the situation: he didn't want to do them; he didn't want anyone else to do them, which is fair enough. But he did have the good grace to ring me up personally after his agent refused the rights.

As for the Troughton stories: no, I didn't try to get the Troughton Dalek stories novelised. But that was because of the problems we'd run into with the Eric Saward stories, which I told you about before. However, I can reveal that when I was clearing my office I was going through my old files, and apparently about two years before I joined WH Allen David Whitaker actually signed a contract, I believe, to novelise *The Power of the Daleks* — I've seen the contract. In the end it fell through for various reasons, but David Whitaker did produce the first twenty pages of *Power of the Daleks*. I don't know where they are. They're probably in some basement in what used to be WH Allen in Hill Street.

Did you have any strict parameters set out for the novelists?

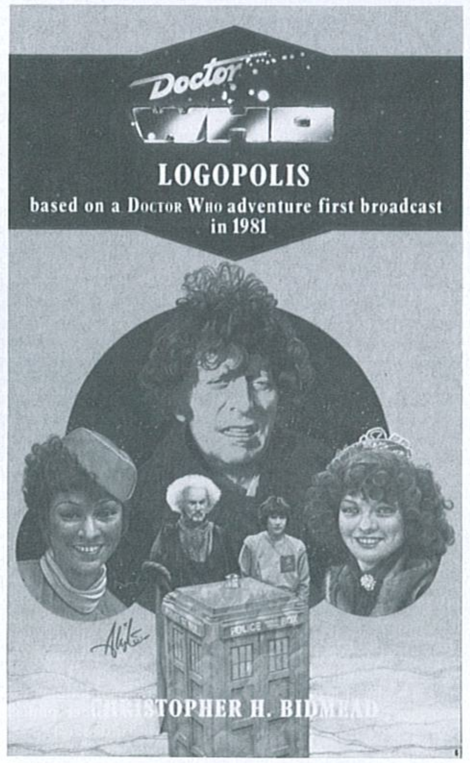
The only strict parameter I set out was that they had to write for an intelligent fifteen year-old, and they also had to bear in mind that the intelligent fifteen year-old is a lot more intelligent than they were when they were fifteen. And also that it



The parishioners of Cheldon Bonniface walk to church on the Sunday before Christmas, 1992. Snow is in the air, or is it the threat of something else? The Reverend Trelow has a premonition, too, and discusses it with the spirit that inhabits his church. Perhaps the Doctor is about to visit them again?

Some years earlier, in a playground in Perivale, Chad Boyle picks up a half-brick. He's going to get that creepy kid Dorothy who says she wants to be an astronaut. The weapon falls, splitting Dorothy's skull. She dies instantly.

The Doctor has pursued the Timewyrm from prehistoric Mesopotamia to Nazi Germany, and then to the end of the universe. He has tracked down the creature again: but what trans-temporal trap has the Timewyrm prepared for their final confrontation?


Doctor WHO
LOGOPOLIS
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STOPHER H. BID

SEPTEMBER sees the long-awaited release of Victor Pemberton's second 'Doctor Who' novelisation 'The Pescatons, plus the updated reprints of 'Genesis of the Daleks' and 'The Masque of Mandragora'.

Looking ahead, the final chapter in the 'Timewyrm' saga - 'Revelation' by Paul Cornell' - and reprints of 'Logopolis' and 'The Greatest Show in the Galaxy' are out in December.

couldn't deviate to a very, very large extent from the transmitted script.

Did you choose which stories you novelised?

Yes! *[laughs]* ... Well, I say yes, I did, but there was very little choice. I wanted to do some Doctor Who novels and the MD of WH Allen wanted me to do some, and there were very few left and the four novelisations I did were the only ones left. And, certainly in the case of *The Edge of Destruction*, no one else would touch it.

Why was that, do you think?

It's very difficult writing a one hundred and forty-four page novel based on two episodes of tv which feature only four characters and one set. It seemed a very difficult book to do.

How closely did you adhere to the original scripts while writing the books?

Bar *The Edge of Destruction*, very closely indeed. I did, however, take some liberties with the scripts. A script on tv can work very well, but when transferred to the printed page it doesn't. For instance, in something like *The Underwater Menace* and *The Time Meddler* there are loads of glaring inconsistencies, which you don't notice on tv but you do when it's written down. So I had to make allowances for that; invent instances which weren't on tv, just to make the plot, as it was on the written page, much more coherent. With *The Edge of Destruction* I kept to the script, but I think half of the novelisation of *The Edge of Destruction* is based on the script. The other half is based on my own imagination; first to flesh out the story and make it fit 144 pages, and also to flesh out the characters and make the characters seem believable and sympathetic.

Were you restricted to a certain word or page count?

Yes, between forty and fifty thousand words was the limit for Doctor Who novelisations, which goes to about 144 pages. Occasionally people went over that, like Victor Pemberton, who did a fantastic job on *Fury From the Deep*, which ran to, I think, 192 pages in the end, and was so good we couldn't cut it.

Why did the novelisations stop at four?

There was nothing else to do. What happens when a script is put up for novelisation is that the original script writer has first say on whether or not he wants to do it. Obviously they do, because there is money to be made in Doctor Who novelisations. After that there were no more to do. Terrance was contracted to do three, I think : *The Space Pirates, The Smugglers* and *Planet of Giants* — and that was it. So really, the four novelisations I did were the only ones left.

You're currently writing Apocalypse, the third book in the Timewyrm saga ...

I've finished it! It got delivered at five minutes to five on the 18th of January.

I take it you contacted Peter Darvill-Evans, rather than the other way around?

I can't quite remember how it happened. I was actually speaking to Peter about another Doctor Who project, which he didn't want to do, and I think the idea of myself doing a novel just arose from conversations we had. I don't think it was a case of Peter approaching me, or vice versa. It just happened.

How much freedom were you allowed with the plot?

More or less absolute freedom. There is a running theme through the first four novels and, as long as we bore that running theme in mind, we could do more or less what we wanted to do. Peter wanted a story set in the far future, which I elected to do, and after that it was all what I wanted to put into it.

Can you give us a brief synopsis?

Er ... you really ought to buy the book! I can't give you a synopsis; I can give you some hints on what it's about. The Doctor is Sylvester McCoy's Doctor and the companion is Ace. I love Sylvester McCoy as a Doctor, I think he's a great Doctor — a fascinating character in that he manipulates the people all the time, and he likes to think that he's very, very superior. What I hope I've done in the book is try and show that the Doctor isn't quite as superior as we think he is, or as he thinks he is; that there's very much of a darker side to him, and that he's not the all-powerful being that he pretends he is, and that he makes mistakes ... some very catastrophic mistakes as well. I can tell you it's set in the far, far future; ten billion years before the end of the universe, which is quite a long time. It has some relation with the events in *Logopolis*. Patrick Troughton's Doctor appears briefly. So, very briefly, do each and every one of Patrick Troughton's companions. And ultimately it's about the battle between the Doctor and a person called the Grand Matriarch and the crucial role that takes place. And there's some genetic manipulation in it too ... and I've probably told you too much already!

You mention that Patrick Troughton appears in it, and some companions. In the first book of the series Jon Pertwee and Tom Baker appear. Is it something that you were asked to do, or told that it might be a good idea?

Not at all. I wasn't aware that Tom Baker was appearing in John Peel's first book. I have heard that Jon Pertwee appears; I'm not quite sure in what respect they feature. In my book Patrick Troughton appears for a very, very good reason. Troughton is almost crucial to the plot. Without Patrick Troughton there would not be an *Apocalypse*. It wasn't something that I set out to do in the first place, but as the book took form in my mind I thought it would be a nice idea. It also underlines the fact that the Doctor is not all-powerful and has made some pretty bad mistakes in his past. But no, it wasn't something I was told to do.

How different is writing an original story to the novelisations?

Very, much more different. When you're doing a novelisation, you've got the bare bones of it already. You've got a script, and no matter what liberties you take with it, in the end what you are doing is just fleshing out someone else's work. With a novel it's all your own work. It takes on a life of its own. When I started, the original idea for a plot has got no comparison with what actually happened. Minor characters in my original plot-line turned into major characters by the end of the novel. One in particular, one secondary character, became a very big character. As the novel progressed he became much, much more of an important character, until he was one of the main characters of the book. So the characters actually took control of me, and the novel. It sounds very pretentious to say so, but the novel took on a life of its own. I would go to the word processor every morning not quite knowing what would happen and what would come out of the word processor at the end of the day.

Have you any plans to follow up this book with any more original stories?

I've got no plans at the moment. I've got a couple of ideas, but no definite plans.

But you would if you were given the opportunity?

Certainly I would. I enjoyed doing *Apocalypse* very much. I hope Peter [Darvill-Evans] likes it as well, and I hope everyone else likes it when it comes out in October. I would like to do another one, but I've got no definite plans at the moment.

At the moment are you working on a freelance basis or have you got a full-time job?

No, I'm totally freelance. I'm Consultant Editor for a major publishing company, who've just been named Publisher of the Year. I also do a lot of work on books with tv people. I've done some books for Phillip Schofield. I've also helped edit some books by Andy Crane and I'm now working on a book with one of the girls from Blue Peter. So, I'm still keeping my hand in with children's tv, and I'm also looking at other projects.

Finally, would you be interested in novelising any of the hitherto unpublished televised stories, if the opportunity arose?

I would like to do *Evil of the Daleks*, and I would love to do *City of Death* — or any of the Dalek stories, in fact, which is probably all that there is left to do now.

Nigel Robinson, thank you very much.

TIMEWYRM: APOCALYPSE by Nigel Robinson will be published by Virgin Books in October.

THEY SAVED HITLER'S BRAIN!

Timewyrm: Exodus

Terrance Dicks; £3.50

Keith Topping

THE NEW
Doctor Who
ADVENTURES
TIMEWYRM: EXODUS
TERRANCE DICKS

> *"General Strauss's 19th army landed in force on the south coast, establishing a beach-head between Folkestone and Worthing. Thanks to the previous defeat of the British Air Force by the invincible Luftwaffe, air supremacy was maintained at all times. Despite the boastings of the arch-criminal Churchill, later executed for war crimes, British resistance was minimal and the operation was completed in six days ..."*
>
> 'The Thousand Year Reich — The Glorious Beginning' by Joseph Goebbels
> New Berlin, 1947

IT IS OFTEN said that history is written by the winning side, and in the case of Terrance Dicks that is certainly true. I've always had a soft spot for el Tel as a writer; although his tv scripts are normally bland and derivative, Dicks has always maintained an understanding of what Doctor Who writing is all about and, although it could never be said that he was in the Robert Holmes league, neither was he in the pit along with Pip and Jane. He is most at home writing for his beloved Pertwee family and the novel adaptations of *Inferno, Mind of Evil* and *The Auton Invasion* remain amongst the finest that the Target range has to offer.

It therefore seems fitting that among the first four 'New Adventures' should come an original Dicksian work. Having said that, it would be unfair to assume that *Exodus* follows, in any way, the established characteristics of the man and his style. There's not a "wheezing and groaning" sound in sight and, although much awful pseudo-science *is* present (I direct the discerning reader to page 141 and a line which includes a phrase which may become as immortal as reversing the polarity of the neutron flow, to wit, "as an explanation of a highly complex psycho-kinetic-spatio-temporal phenomenon, it's a bit on the simplistic side ..." Yeh, like, I thought so too, man!), Terrance Dicks displays hitherto unsuspected talents in several areas. Characters swear, they are humorous without resorting to Dicks' normal trick of taking a pun from a tv script and not only re-telling it, but also hitting the audience over the head with an explanation. An example of this is in a short passage in which Dicks rips off the classic Monty Python 'Spanish Inquisition' sketch. Not only isn't the source acknowledged, but the line is thrown in as a genuine *sample*, with no hint that it is anything other than an original idea. Nice one Terry, very 80s!

Exodus concerns parallel-time in much the same way that *Inferno* does, and it is, perhaps, easy to understand why such a blatantly obvious plot has been used again. In the wake of a spate of recent Hollywood movies, several either directly or indirectly influenced by Doctor Who, the paradoxes of time-travel have been explored to the fullest — in the wake of Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventures, which use the concept of changing the future by tinkering with the past, the time seems ripe for a Doctor Who novel that applies the most basic of time principles to the series canon — to wit, how much damage could be done to the world by a simple act of time vandalism. *The Kings' Demons* played with this theme, but *Exodus* does it much better.

I must admit that I had some initial reservations about the New Adventures, having spent time and effort attempting to plough my way through several Star Trek novels and finding them, by and large, to be in-jokey, continuity conscious, badly plotted and, mostly, very boring. John Peel's initial New Adventure heightened my fears, with its preposterous teen-wank opening and, despite an undoubtedly interesting premise, destroyed by too many characters most of whom aren't anywhere near developed enough for a story of this scale. The characters in *Exodus* happily fair much better, although characterisation has never been one of Dicks' strong points and I found myself on occasions wishing that he would develop one of these shallow people that flit around the periphery of the action into somebody that I could care about. Happily Terrance is familiar enough with how to tell a rattlingly good old-fashioned action story (this man was script editor of *The Invasion* after all!) — however, he tempers the period trappings with a quality of prose that is both surprising and encouraging.

In *Exodus*, the Timewyrm finds her/itself magnetically drawn to the mind of Adolf Hitler, post first world war, a neurotic and pathetic figure. Then ... Well, Terrance gets a bit carried away with his pretentions and starts to think he's Christopher Bailey. That the early chapters of Exodus work is, perhaps, more due to the nature of the story and the marvellous and very believable period research and detail of a 1951 England held in the grip of post-war fascism than to the strengths of his villains. Taken as a simple "what if ..." story *Exodus* rattles along at a cracking pace, stamping on the grave of xenophobia (an old Dicks theme — remember *Ambassadors of Death* anyone?) and painting the Doctor into a very serious dilemma, which involves the setting straight of a period in history in which millions die simply so that more millions in the future can live freely. It's an interesting question, well handled by the author.

If I have a problem with *Exodus*, it's in Terrance Dicks' handling of the Doctor, who spends much of the early chapters acting as a mouthpiece for some very dodgy politics and then is reduced to very much a stock figure who could almost have been any of the previous Doctors, but notably Pertwee. His dialogue doesn't sound like McCoy, his actions certainly aren't Cartmellian, and his angst towards the end is typical of the Letts-Dicks era: replace the Sea Devils with the human race and you have a perfect homily to waste just waiting to be used again and again. Possibly that's being unfair to the writer since, in essence, the Doctor conforms to every test that can be applied to him. He is courageous, mysterious, eccentric, brilliant, and, ultimately, successful — the dialogue, strange as it sometimes is, is very well written and again gives lie to a long held belief amongst many fans that Terrance Dicks can't write dialogue properly. Any story with lines of dialogue like "Have you any idea what [the Nazi's] were like when they started out? A broken down drug-addicted ex-pilot, a failed chicken farmer, an unsuccessful snob of a champagne salesman with a fake title, and ratty little lecher embittered by a club foot. A gang of total deadbeats led by a paranoid failed art student ..." can't be all bad!

Another slight fault is that Terrance plays into the traditional historical trick of assuming that Adolf Hitler was a bland, psychotic thug. This is a fallacy that needs to be destroyed once and for all. He was insane, certainly, and it was an insanity that seemed directly related to his position in the eyes of others. He was a coward, a bully and, in his foreign policy at least, a fool. But politically, he was a genius and that element of the myth that was Hitler is all too often forgotten. His control over Germany during the 30s was awesome and there was nothing supernatural about it: it was simply down to cold, hard, immaculate politics. He appealed to the decadent middle classes, their wealth ruined by the 1924 inflation crisis, the embittered nationalists, castrated by Versailles, to the workers, who saw him as the people's champion, indeed to every segment of German society (except, of course, as Terrance points out, the Jews, gypsies, homosexuals, trade-unionists, certain religious groups and intellectuals, whom he found too dangerous or difficult to handle) — his politics depended on a basic human need, that of having a scapegoat to blame our own failings upon.

There are other plot elements that are to be applauded. The use of Gallifreyan mythology, the wonderfully sick concept of an aborted regeneration (think about it!), the use of continuity, which is never as suffocating or omni-present as in many of Dicks' novels, the feeling that runs through the entire book that here we have a scenario in which the Doctor must use seven lifetimes of accumulated knowledge to provide a solution. They'd never have been able to film it — it'd cost too much to begin with, and also many of the concepts might well be considered too touchy for Doctor Who to get involved in — but as a novel, *Exodus* works in a way that Genesys never even got close to. Oh, there are some surprise villains in there too — they're previously established time-travellers, half-created by Terrance Dicks. No more clues!

The Nazi myth is a powerfully strong image whose searing scar on human consciousness shows no sign of diminishing almost fifty years after their godhead died a pathetic death in a Berlin bunker; it seems fitting that the ideology of terror should have finally met with the ideology of universal heroism. To, badly, misquote Rudolph Hess's chilling rhetoric that ended many a Nuremberg rally, *"Ein Reich, Ein Volk, Ein Führer, Ein Doktor"*. Perhaps, if Martin Bormann is reading this he can confirm whether Terrance Dicks accurately captures the characteristics of Goering, Himmler et al. If not, we'll simply have to make do with the artistic licence and admire the cheek!

Nine out of ten, Terrance, but you missed an opportunity with Hemmings ... Oh damn, there goes the twist ending!

IAN SCOONES

LAST ISSUE IAN RECOUNTED HIS FORMULATIVE YEARS IN THE VISUAL EFFECTS INDUSTRY, LEARNING THE ROPES AT HAMMER AND WITH GERRY ANDERSON'S A.P. FILMS. WE CONTINUE THIS INTERVIEW CONCENTRATING ON HIS DURABLE STINT WITH THE B B C...

IAN, when did you join the Corporation?

Some time in 1969, straight from having worked on The Battle Of Britain which nearly every effects man in the business did. I joined up as part of a major expansion within the BBC Visual Effects Department at that time - I applied via an advert in The Evening News - and also there was Tony Harding and, later, Richard Conway from **Thunderbirds.** We all knew the **Thunderbirds** 'technique' and so obviously we applied that to the rather old-fashioned way of doing things at the BBC to try to give it more realism. Kids were our biggest critics, on **Thunderbirds** and **Doctor Who;** they watched and knew if something wasn't right. We had to match the big name movies at the cinema but on very little money so we often borrowed ideas that had been used on **Thunderbirds,** but although the Ealing cameramen were very well trained for doing documentaries and live action, there had been nobody around up to then to tell them how to shoot miniatures.

They had this strange system at the BBC for interviewing potential employees, which I was not particularly fond of. You go there and you meet a board of about five or six people sitting at this top table and Jack Kine was there to sort of assess you and see if you're the right person to work for him or under him. The others are these grey, faceless BBC people who have nothing to do with the job at all but they're also assessing you to see if you're a "suitable person for the Corporation". I found that terribly snobbish. As I said, they were in the process of expanding the department, but it's not always a good idea to expand. On **Thunderbirds** I remember Ezra Dearing, who worked with the puppets, having directives from Gerry saying "Look, we're getting behind on making these models - the boys keep blowing them up and you can't repair them quickly enough!", and Ezra would say, "How can I help it, I've had a problem with Thunderbird 2 - look at the state of it", and there was this sort of smouldering doughnut! We had to start right from scratch so they decided to double the personnel in the model shop from 12 to 24 people overnight - which doesn't work because you get twice as many people talking to each other!

Were you a fully-fledged designer by the time you arrived at the BBC?

Oh no, I started at the bottom again! There were about ten FX designers when I started, including Michael John Harris, Reece Jones, Peter Day and the late Ron Oates. We were under Jack Kine and Bernard Wilkie, who were a double-headed eagle: Jack was the ideas man and Bernard was the one who worked it all out. Jack was basically a scenic artist turned effects man and Bernard an engineer turned effects man. They did all the effects work for the BBC during the early '50s until gradually the department started to expand and employ more people.

What sort of effects people was the BBC looking for when you joined?

A bit of everything. They didn't want people who had written in saying 'Ooh, I've been playing with my dad's railway set all these years - can I be a VFX designer?' They wanted people with outside experience in all fields. This upset the ones who were already there - they looked at us as if to say 'Who's this new bunch coming in trying to tell us what to do and what not to do?', so it wasn't a very happy first few months.

How long was your initiation period before you received your own commission?

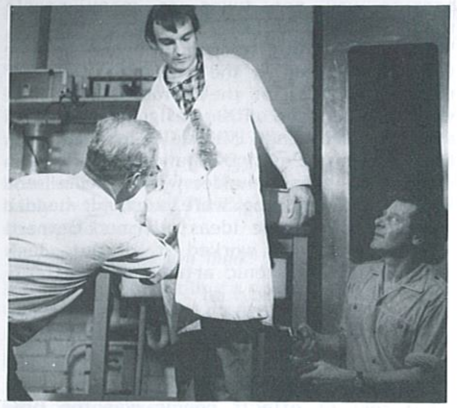
I actually got a commission on the model side straight away, which again upset everybody. Jack said 'Ian is a model man so he'll do all the miniatures for the next two years on all the **Doctor Whos**', but that idea was changed because there were a lot of other designers who were only doing floor stuff who also wanted to do model work. However I did do the model work for a few **Doctor Whos** without a credit, and then went on to credited work; I remember working on Michael Briant's first one **(Colony in Space).** There was a board up in the department and whoever became available would go onto it, so if a job came in the designer would take the assistant's name off. It wasn't until much later when you could actually choose your own show, so you went on to anything with anybody; Crackerjack, The Generation Game, I even did The Goodies with John Horton down in Jersey which was the huge Magic Roundabout pastiche!

Your first encounter with 'Doctor Who' was as an assistant on 'The Space Pirates' in 1969.

The designer on **The Space Pirates** was John Horton, a brilliant designer who had worked on **2001** and who had established himself at the BBC by the time I arrived. He was a great inventor and I worked under him. The photograph of me holding one of the models from the story which John made (ref: In-Vision: **The Invisible Enemy)** was purely a staged picture for an updating of Bernard Wilkie's book on special effects (John wasn't around at the time!). In fact the third edition is about to be published at any moment by Focal Books and will be of interest to anyone interested in reading in greater detail about television visual effects. It's got a picture on the cover of my fire sequence from Rebecca and is available from the Cinema Bookshop off Tottenham Court Road or the M.O.M.I. exhibition (10% please Bernard!).

How did you come to be involved on the 'Doomwatch' episode 'Tomorrow the Rat'?

My involvement with **Doomwatch** was purely doing research work with other designers using mechanical rats. I wasn't actually involved on the effecst side of the episode and so wasn't credited.

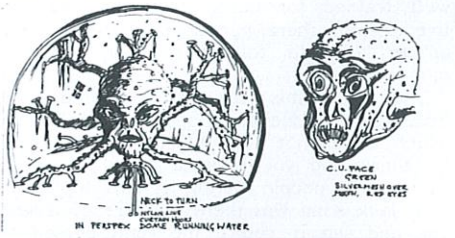


The rats were operated by bicycle brake cables to make their metallic mouths open and close. Some had animatronic heads and revolved and others had movable front paws. Tony Oxley was the designer and mentor of that very early and quite crude form of mechanics, but it worked.

Your first 'Doctor Who' credit proper was 'The Curse of Peladon' which you worked on in 1971. Probably the most memorable scene from that story was the TARDIS hurtling down an all-too-realistic cliff-face housing the Peladonian castle.

Yes, that was the first time I tried to expand the BBC's knowledge by setting the sequence out as a storyboard to give everyone an instant understanding of what I had in mind for the sequence, particularly the director, which worked very well. I brought Mike Wilson in from **Thunderbirds** to light it, but when the union found out that we'd used a non-BBC person they banned us from doing it again. So I said "Right, we'll do it the other way around instead. They can't stop me going to another studio and hiring the people and equipment I needed", so after that I sometimes took a team over to some of the smaller sound stages at Bray to shoot miniature sequences.

I built the cliff-face set at the so-called "Puppet Theatre" which was called that because they used to do some of the Muffin The Mules there. In reality it was a no-man's land between studios four and five at the Television Centre which the BBC had moved to after leaving its studios at Alexandra Palace. It was an odd area given to VFX and it was very difficult to shoot in there because of this pillar right in the middle of the floor. I had been given the job of trying to make it into a working studio and I lived there for a time because I tended to work on my own in the evenings till about ten, called it a day, went to the pub for an hour and went back to sleep, and that meant that I had no interference from anybody else and I could do what I wanted to do. That was how it started with doing minatures and models for **Doctor Who.** I wasn't being paid for it after 5 o'clock, but I didn't mind because it was very much like painting a picture to me - money doesn't come into it, it's something fulfilling and rewarding. So that was where I built the Peladon set though it wasn't as big as it looks but we used a wide angle lens to shoot it.


NECK TO TURN
NYLON LINE
CURTAIN HOOKS
IN PERSPEX DOME RUNNING WATER
C.U. FACE
GREEN
SILVER MESH OVER MOUTH, RED EYES

I also designed Arcturus, this hideous green-headed skull-like thing, and they went and gave it this silly little squeaky voice. I wanted to scare the pants off the kiddies and get Mary Whitehouse running to the phone screaming 'How dare the BBC put this stuff on!' But if something was horrific they would always back peddle and try and make it less shocking, as they also did with Alpha Centauri which was designed by costume.

Was Arcturus a visual effect then?

Yes, basically because it was a mechanical effect and had water being pumped up around it.

Was there ever any conflict between departments as to who should do what?

There were some demarcations. For example Raymond Cusick will say "I designed the Daleks" and Jack Kine and Bernard Wilkie will each say "I designed the Daleks". In fact the truth of the story is that they all roughed out a sort of sketch that they agreed with the producer and it went to the model maker Shawcraft. Even Shawcraft contributed to the design because they had a lot of half-spheres left over from another job and stuck them all over the Daleks, so it was designed by 'committee' basically. Nobody actually designed the Dalek as we know them.

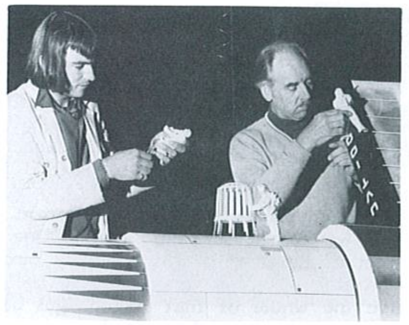
Was Barry Letts a great help to you?

A great help. He was producer, script editor, director - he's done the lot; a very sympathetic man and a good producer to work for. Of course, as all producers would do, he'd often say "This sounds wonderful...if you could keep the money down then go ahead, let's see it!" He was one of those dedicated sort of producers who would have open days at Ealing with film cameramen to try and show what we could do electronically and what we could do on film. I remember making lots of models that were just set pieces for these little seminars which would be attended by other people in the BBC, usually other producers who could well be given shows like **Doctor Who.** In a way it was to prepare them for the shock of walking into a technically complex show and thinking 'My God, this is out of my control', because it's a bit off-putting if you're a producer going into a studio for the first time and everything is blue and your actor's wearing a blue hand or maybe a blue head! So, for example, we'd show them the earliest technique of Chromakey, or CSO as the Beeb called it for some unknown reason - they **had** to have their own names for everything!

How did your creative side meld, clash or whatever with the developing area of electronic effects, such as Chromakey, which were starting to develop in the early '70s?

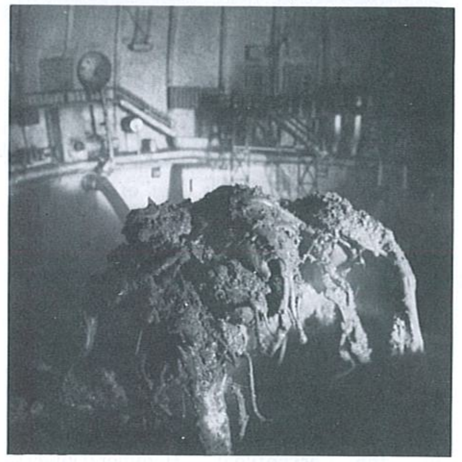
Well, "Mad" Mitch Mitchell would look after the electronic side totally and he'd be up in the gallery one moment and pushing a cameraman out of the way and saying "No, do it this way" the next. He got away with it because he was very highly respected and a very clever guy. It would be decided at an early production meeting which bits he was going to do and which bits we were going to do.

Talking of creative people, I was very sad when Douglas Camfield died. Down here in Rochester we have a famous hotel called the Bull, which is mentioned in many of the Dickensian novels, and they were doing a **Doctor Who** just across the water from here. I went to The Bull one evening after they'd finished filming for a knees-up and a drink and Douggie was there playing his guitar and keeping everybody amused till about 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning, and still getting up and directing in the morning! He had a pace-maker as you probably know, and most people have one fitted to keep their heart going - his was to slow him down because his heartbeat was twice as high as the average man's and so he was burning his life up twice as quickly than he should have been.



Around this time you were involved with Bernard Wilkie in making some miniatures for what would have been 'Quatermass 4'.

Nigel Kneale had written a script which the BBC were considering, and Bernard and I designed and built all the miniatures for it which included a space station with rockets docking. We filmed the sequences at Ealing in June '73, but the BBC decided in the end to scrap the project so our footage was never used. Actually one of my first jobs for the BBC was to recreate a famous scene from **Quatermass 2** of a monster growing inside a tank for a programme called Those Were The Days. Jack Kine described exactly how they'd done it the first time round - the original footage wasn't up to the quality they wanted - so we did a complete remake in two days. It was a wonderful feeling to go into the pub the next night after it was shown and hear all these people go on about the old shows and how it was great to see that bit of **Quatermass** again, and they didn't realise it was all done two days before!



Your next 'Doctor Who' credit was for 'Frontier in Space'.

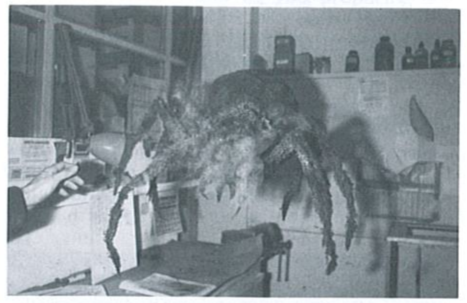
That was around the time that A.P.Films /Century 21 closed. I heard that they were literally clearing everything out into the car park and selling it to anyone who wanted it, so I suggested to Bernard that we took a BBC lorry down and fill it up with everything. Bernard, Mat Irvine and I went down there with a driver and we were literally just pulling stuff off the shelves and throwing them into boxes, and the lot just cost us £75! At the time the BBC were getting more and more into miniatures, and so the haul meant that they didn't need to pay someone every time we needed a set of, say, model oak trees - we now had a ready-made library! A lot of the model vehicles we couldn't use because they were recognisably from various Anderson productions, like the bulldozer from that wonderful **Thunderbirds** episode - **City of Fire** - and some ended up in **Frontier in Space.** However the model work for that suffered badly and lacked any depth due to the bad lighting, and so I persuaded Bernard to use Bray Studios as a miniatures facility and to hire cameramen from there who knew how to light and shoot models properly.

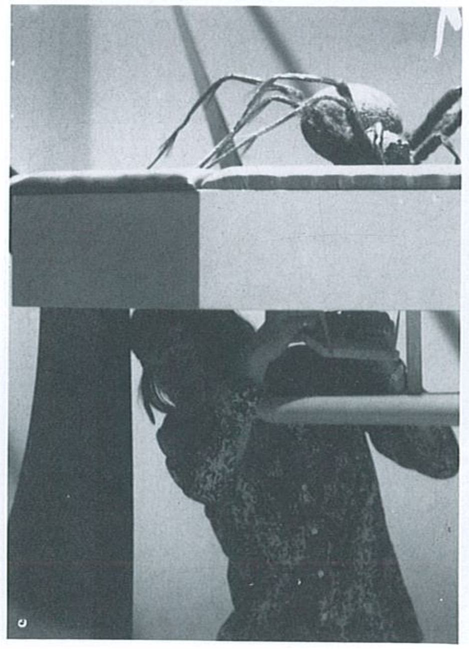
Presumably Bernard Wilkie, with whom you were jointly credited, did all the non-model/miniature VFX work?

I certainly wasn't involved in the Dalek sequence at the end. Strangely enough I've never worked with them apart from on one that Peter Day asked me to do which was an insert. He came to me and said "They want to open the top and they want to see something - what can we put inside?", and I very quickly made a spongey thing covered in green slime.

You were also one of the many designers who contributed ideas for 'The Planet of the Spiders'.

Yes, I loosely based my design on the poster of the American '50s film, Tarantula, where this great giant spider emerged out of this huge atomic explosion terrorising everybody and sucking the sap from every human in sight, getting bigger and bigger all the time. Bernard Wilkie was in charge on that story and basically one day he wandered around asking different people what they could come up with. I made my concept from the same material I used to make moss for the underwater scenes in **Thunderbirds** and **Stingray.** I hung a strip up and sprayed it with solanised paint and I found that it dried very much like a sort of matted hairy leg - which was just what I wanted, but as I explained about Arcturus earlier, it was simply too horrific for Barry. In the end Bernard accepted Mat's concept.





You must have been pleased when Philip Hinchcliffe arrived with the emphasis very much on gothic horror?

Philip Hinchcliffe was my favourite producer. He and I got along so well together and we thought along the same lines - we didn't want **Doctor Who** to be a kiddie winks' show, it was watched by the whole family. We both agreed that kids love being scared, and if they are hiding behind the sofa then they are not looking at it anyhow. Barry and I got on very well together but he was always pulling my reins back as a designer. If I could get some slime dripping somewhere or whatever I would!

What about directors? Did you find some easier to work for than others?

Oh yes, you could almost say it's like finding the right dancing partner. You're going to have people who are going to tread all over your toes and others that whisk you through and others that you have something in common with so you can build together and create as a team, which is what it's all about.

Did you do a lot of experimenting to formularise new ways of creating effects?

Yes. A **Doctor Who** story called for the surface of a sun, and I experimented with acitone and silver paint in a cocoa tin lid and found that the solution moved beautifully. I then found that if you put a red filter over it it looks like a close-up of the sun which Patrick Moore would be proud of. Les Bowie saw me doing this at Bray Studios and used the same technique on a bigger scale for Superman I. The only problem that he didn't realise - and neither did I - was that the solution stripped the paint off the cameras and rünined the lenses and it was dreadfully toxic, and since the cameras were on hire there were some very upset people. However I got a great compliment in a book which interviewed Les in which he credited the effect to me.

Was it your proudest achievement do you think?

I don't know, it's very difficult to say. To answer your question, yes, I experiment, but if you can't think of an idea you ask around for other ideas and then you put them into practice and build it up from there. You also bring the young trainees in if they've got wonderful ideas. You listen to them, and if they're bloody awful, stupid ideas you don't.

Is that why you and Mat Irvine got on so well?

Yes. Bernard, Mat and I think very much alike. All three of us shared the feeling that it's what's **on screen** that matters - not the arguing, the experimentation or the overtime or even the money.

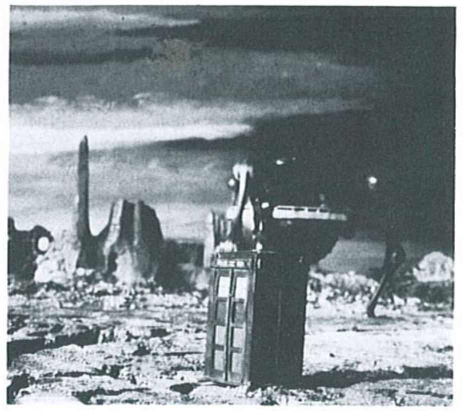
There were some effects designers at the Beeb who were strictly engineers, and by that I mean they were mathematical thinkers, they weren't creative thinkers. They would look at the script and they would give just the very basics that were required. Others of us liked to build on the idea and suggest something that was almost better than the writer first conceived.

How much did the change in production

style between Letts and Hinchcliffe alter the VFX perspective on 'Doctor Who'?
You were never working on consecutive **Doctor Whos** so there would be gaps when you'd be doing all sorts of other programmes and eventually you'd come back to doing **Doctor Who** and you'd find there was a new producer. So you would have a drink with him or whatever and he would get to know you for 5 or 10 minutes, but most of the time you were always working with new people. Every production meeting you go to they've got a new camera man, a new make-up lady, and of course a new cast, so you would take people as you found them and you didn't know whether you were going to get on with them or not, but even if you didn't you still had to pull together because it's 'The Show' that matters! The reason we didn't work on consecutive **Doctor Whos** was for much the same reason that they used different writers to keep the flow of different talents coming in all the time, and you change yourself to a certain extent.

Do you feel the show suffered through not having an appointed production designer to oversee the work?
Well, each visual effects designer or each set designer would feel that he has that power anyway. At the BBC it is really down to the director. He knows what he should be looking for, or should know, and it's down to him to say either 'Yes, that is going to fit in' or 'No, that's not going to fit in'. There's also the difficulty of rivalry. Everyone wants their pound of flesh and they're all competing for their little bit. For example actors do it with close-ups, and if he or she realises they're not getting the close-ups they want then they get infuriated with the director. There is terrible rivalry.

Did you ever suffer with any problems with actors in relation to VFX?
Not very often. Most professionals are incredibly sympathetic to the job in hand. I had a bit of trouble with Julian Glover in **City of Death** because he didn't like wearing that mask. We always had one stunt guy around on **Doctor Who**, like Stuart Fell or Terry Walsh, and a lot of time he would have to stand in and wear the mask. It was originally made for the little gills to flap with air but Julian didn't want all that going on. It was almost like a miniature hydra-head and the little gills could be inflated. I designed the mask and John Friedlander made it. I just said "Let's have a can of worms"! I always think in terms of creatures, hence the Jagaroth spaceship which resembled a spider. To get a concept of what horrifies people you ask them what creatures they don't like.



When the Count supposedly ripped off his human face, his Scaroth head was twice as big underneath!
Yes, that cut him down to size didn't it! I think the reason it appeared bigger than it should have been was because the flap wasn't tucked in at the back for the front shots. Julian just didn't like wearing that mask so it made it look bigger than it really was.

A few years before that though you oversaw 'The Pyramids of Mars'.
It was one of my favourites because it was very much like a Hammer spoof. I actually bid for that one and they said 'Take it away'. All the ideas in it were to give it the feeling of 'a Mummy film!' Paddy Russell, the director, was also very enthusiastic. There was a lovely breakable balsa wood chest I made for a fight sequence with all the pretty hieroglyphics on it, and when she saw it she said "No, I can't let that be smashed, it's too beautiful" (but I'd also made three more!).

There was a very effective sequence where Scarman is shot by the poacher and his guts explode and then heal instantly.
That's been done more recently with Peter Cushing in one of his last films, Top Secret, where everything is shot back to front, and we perfected that back in the '70s on **Doctor Who**!

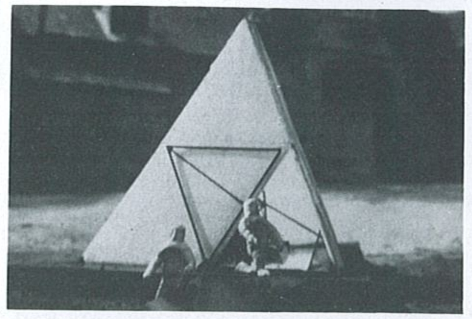
How many takes did you need to perfect it?
About two or three. It was fairly awkward for the actors and it was difficult for us too because Paddy didn't actually direct that at all. She said "I'm so confused, take it away", so I had to direct that sequence. I also directed a lot of the second unit stuff for Hammer as well.

The mummy cases were very authentic.
That was back to me again. One of Bernard's discoveries was a lovely outside contractor who was very cheap to use. He made the whole of that sarcophagus based on Tutankhamun and painted it blue so that we could Chromakey into it. I designed and made the God-head mask myself.

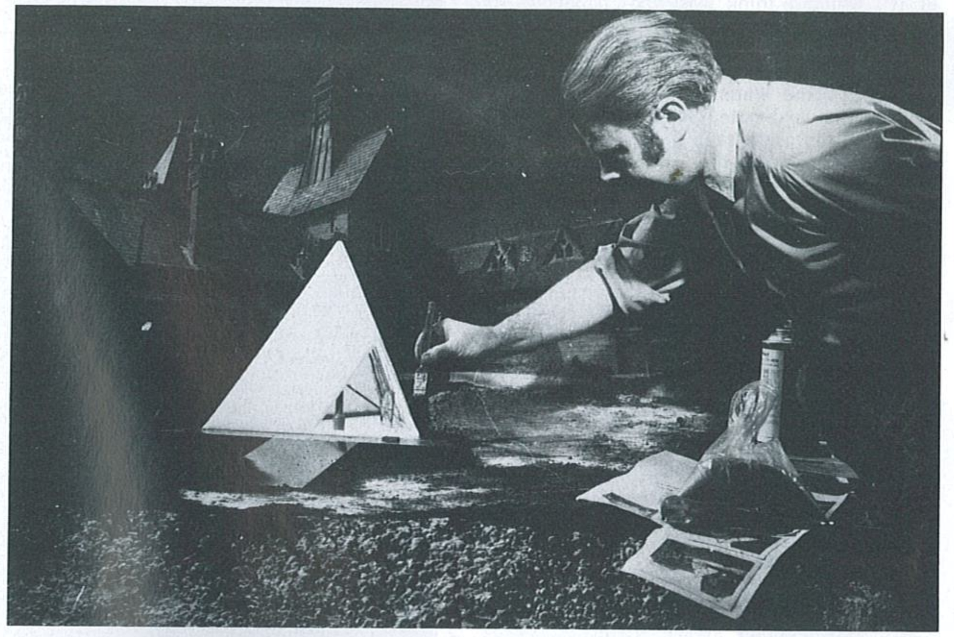
How was the smouldering feet effect done?
The feet were basically insteps where Scarman walked. I cut holes in the steps and replaced these with blockboard backing on an alluminium Z, so as you tread on it the carpet - which was so fluffy so it wouldn't show the join - is cut. I put tiny little marks for the actor and said "Hit the centre of that and the steps will go down", and then we rigged up some smoke underneath, and I think it worked!

The mummys themselves were not based on the archetypal Hammer/Universal versions, in fact they were quite unique.

Barbara Kidd, the costume designer, designed and made those. We shot it at Star Grove which was Mick Jagger's home. He wasn't 'in' at the time but his parents were, and the odd coincidence which nobody knew at the time was that it was the ancestral home of Lord Canarvan, the man who discovered Tutankhumun's tomb. It was over half way through shooting when they said "You know who used to live here? The original man that dug up the Valley of the Kings and supposedly had the curse...".

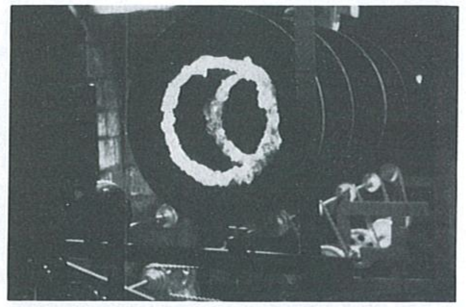


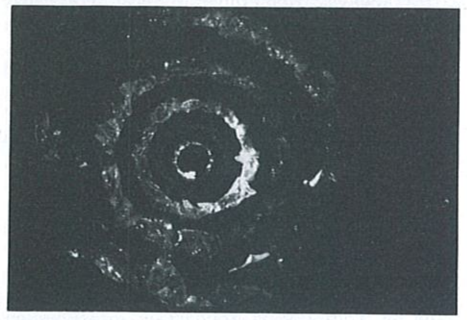
That story ended with a big bang.
That again was a Les Bowie technique of blowing up a photograph of the house, exploding the model replica in the foreground, take the top cut-out off, do another bang and edit the two together.



There are some shots of you preparing the TARDIS for its spin through space in 'Pyramids of Mars' which was retained as a library shot and re-used for other stories.
That was beause it looked better suspended on one wire and spinning than on two wires stationary. I thought it would look much better as a sort of a gyrascope rather than a stationary model in front of a space backdrop.

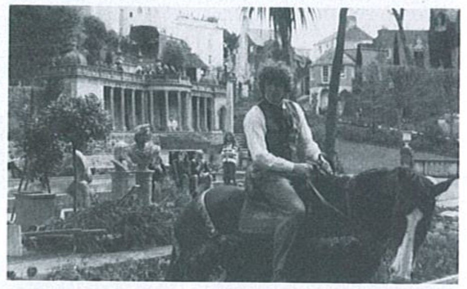
How was the whirlpool effect for the Mandragora Helix achieved?
It was basically a perspex cone filled with transparent wallpaper paste which is slowly spun with the use of a propellor on an electric drill, mounted and water-tight sealed. This gives a controllable spin of anything dropped into the paste, in our

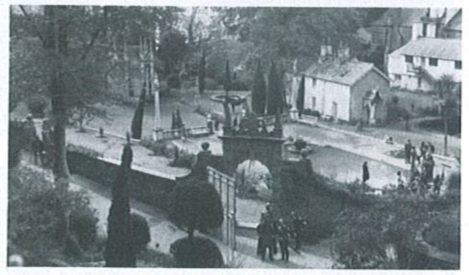




case miniature polystyrene balls to represent the stars of the spinning galaxy. The perspex could be lit from underneath and photographed vertically from above, so that as we start to spin the stars start moving - a convuluting convex if you like.

What pre-planning did you do for the location work at Portmierion?





As always one does the storyboard, a script breakdown, and then start to design what we needed to take up to the location. My assistant on that was Ken Bonphrey.

How was the sparks over the water effect and the shooting star achieved?
That was a combination of physical effects on location and electronic effects in the studio later. We had an ignitor cord which gives off smoke and a fizz and it could be lit underwater. The shooting star basically was an industrial sparkler, like six ordinary sparklers put together,which we did in the studio later and married it up to give the impression that it is coming across the sky, simply by panning the camera across

the sparkler to give the feeling of movement.

Your next credit, 'The Invisible Enemy', which is covered in more depth by In-Vision, saw the introduction of K9.

K9 hadn't been established originally as a continuing character. It was purely due to positive feedback from the public generated by the pre-season publicity. Although the design came under visual effects, I played no part at all in his creation because, at that time, it was decided by Bernard Wilkie that the story needed two designers, so we had Tony Harding doing the floor effects and locations and I oversaw the miniatures and models. However, I had produced the original sketch for K9 which was a sort of ferocious doberman in armour. That was what I wanted but Tony came up with a brilliant design which was very simple and cheap to produce.

I always remember that K9 was eventually getting more fan mail than Tom Baker, and he used to get so jealous. Actors are very sensitive and temperamental creatures and he would kick the dog in rehearsals so it wouldn't work! In each script more and more was written in for K9 because he was becoming so popular, and the two guys we hired from Aeromodels in Slough to look after the dog - so that we didn't have to get involved at all - would add extra solanoids and circuits so that K9 could do something different for each new story. K9 would get the shit kicked out of him by Tom during rehearsals in an effort to stop it working so that the director would hopefully say 'I can't be bothered with the bloody dog, it never bloody works. Let's cut that scene out today', and Tom would sigh and think 'Right, the camera's going to be on me instead'!

Tom was starting to get a little uncontrollable at this stage wasn't he?

What tends to happen you see is that you have a different director on every story so the person that's really in charge is the leading player. They would feel they know it better than anybody else, and of course that can put a lot of directors off. Sometimes Tom would say "I'm not having that in the script - it's rubbish!", so the director would back-peddle. Eventually they would get so big-headed that the producer would just say 'We're not having him for the next series - he's talked himself out of it', which I think was what happened to Jon Pertwee who had sort of manouevered himself into the position of getting the script writers to incorporate 'extras' into his stories, the Whomobile in **Planet of the Spiders** for example. He made so much money for himself taking them on personal appearances and the BBC would say 'Alright, it's crept in in this one but we're not having it in the next episode', so Jon was effectively left with a white elephant! Everyone in the business tries to manouevre things to their advantage.

'The Invisible Enemy' and 'The City of Death' - both Graham Williams productions - seemed to have vastly bigger proportions of the budget allocated to the visual effects side then normal.

Yes, give dear Graham Williams a large gin and tonic and he was anybody's! If you got to know him first he'd say "Right, we'll lose that actor because he costs too much and I'll recast, and if you think you can do that model we'll have that and we'll get a lesser known actor in for this part..."!

Is that why 'The Invisible Enemy' was devoid of any prominent guest actors?

Yes - they couldn't afford them!

GUIDE TO PHOTOGRAPHS

PAGE 41: (Left to right) Roger Dicken, Ian Scoones, Shaun Whitaker-Cooke and Jim Elliot prepare a model sequence for the 'Thunderbirds' episode 'End of the Road'.

PAGE 42: Ian acting as guinea pig to Tony (right) Oxley's revolutionary rats for the infamous 'Doomwatch' episode, assisted by Ricky Grosser; Preparing the camera for the famous 'Curse of Peladon' scene in which the TARDIS plummets down a cliff-face, as shown in coloum two; Ian's original design for Arcturus and the finished product.

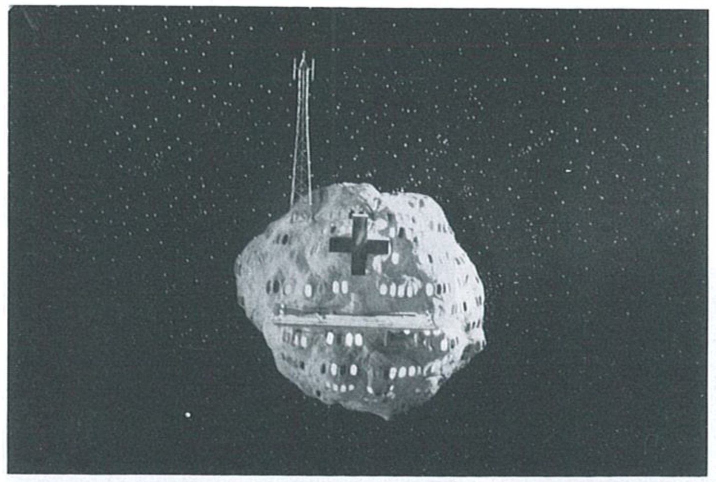
PAGE 43: Ian and Bernard Wilkie work fruitlessly preparing a space station for the aborted 'Quatermass IV'; Ian's remake of a famous scene from 'Quatermass II'; Ian's visualisation of the spiders from Metebelis 3 which were rejected in favour of Mat Irvine's less horrific concept which Ian helped to operate (below).

PAGE 44: (Middle column) The primeval Earth landscape housing a miniature TARDIS and the Jagaroth spaceship (Ian's work on 'The City of Death' will be covered in depth in the In-Vision release next year); (below) Another miniature TARDIS scene, this time for the "Earth's alternative future" sequence in 'Pyramids of Mars'; The mask of Horus designed by Ian and (below) a Mummy designed by Barbara Kidd.

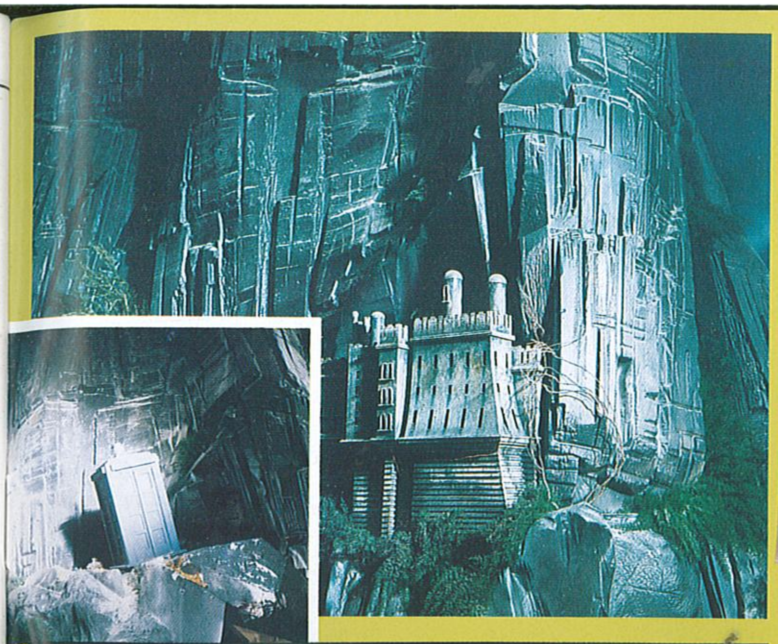
PAGE 45: Ian's assistant, Ken Bonphrey, applies the final touches to the doomed spaceship mock-up with the giant photographic blow-up of the house in the background; (below) Ian assembles the TARDIS miniature for its famous 'spin through space'; (right) the machine devised to create the Mandragora Helix; The beautiful village of Portmierion provided the magnificent backdrop for the location filming on 'Masque of Mandragora', recently released on BBC Video.

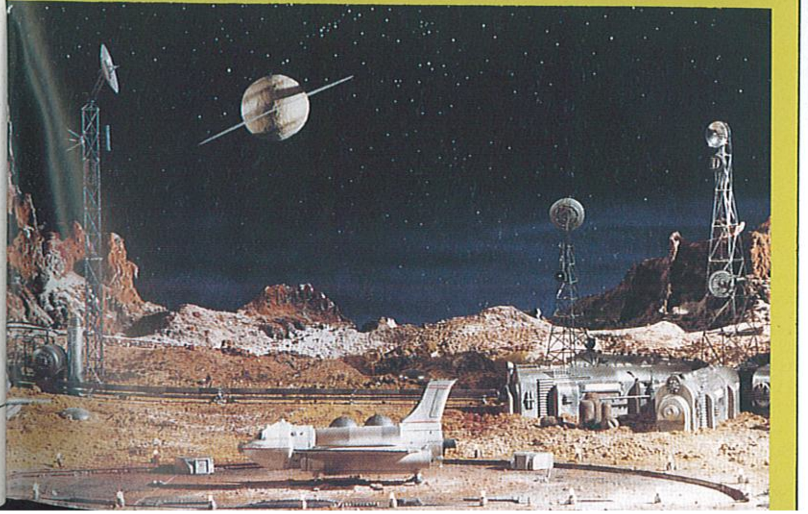
PAGE 46: Ian's stunning work on 'The Invisible Enemy' (note the storyboard below).

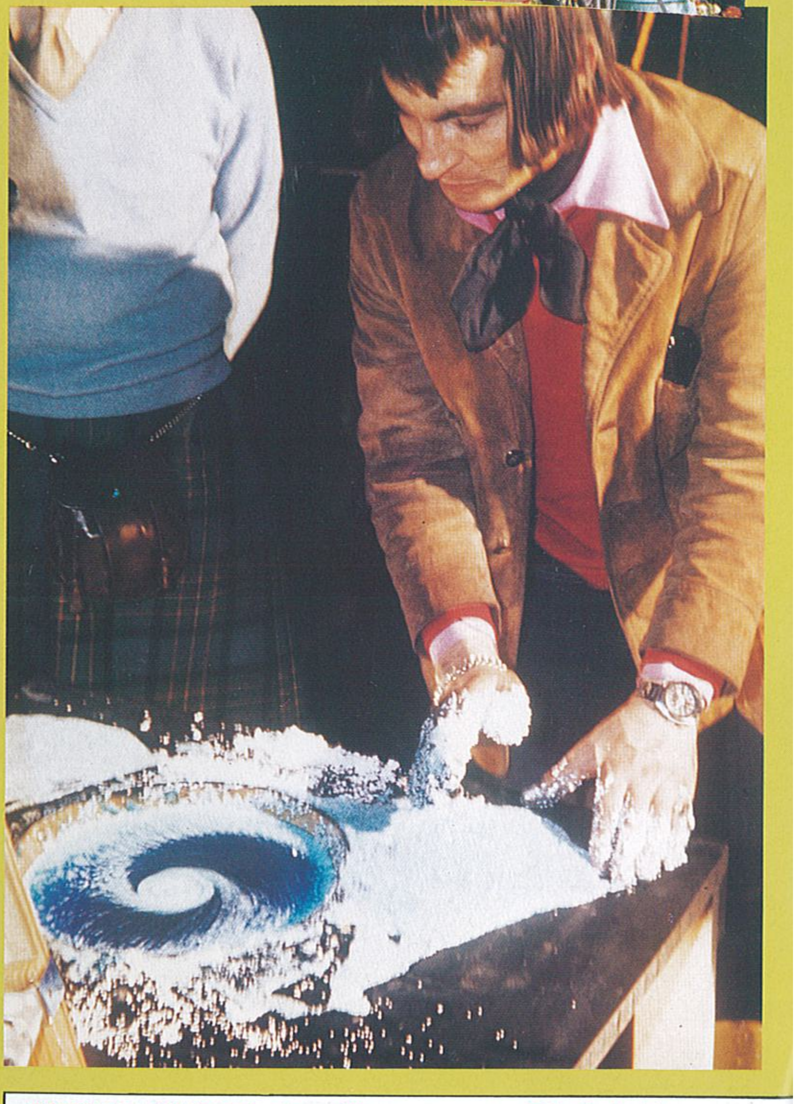
PAGE 47: (first column) The model of the castle of Peladon and (inset) the TARDIS; Ian tends to Arcturus; The end result of Ian's hard work for 'The Invisible Enemy'; (second column) Tom & Terry, alias Tom Baker and stunt double Terry Walsh at Portmierion; Preparing the Mandragora Helix; The spaceship The London from 'Blake's 7'.



BACK COVER: Tom Baker and Elisabeth Sladen from 'Pyramids of Mars' with Ian's sarcophagus which is now housed at the M.O.M.I. exhibition.







NEXT ISSUE: Ian Scoones on Blake's 7 . . . .